

THE OPERATIONAL MENTORING AND LIAISON TEAM PROGRAM AS A
MODEL FOR ASSISTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE
AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

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General Studies

by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

THE OPERATIONAL MENTORING AND LIAISON TEAM PROGRAM AS A MODEL FOR ASSISTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY, by Jan Erik Haug, 136 pages.

Through its security assistance mission in Afghanistan, NATO is reinforcing member countries' collective security at home and providing Afghanistan the chance to build a secure and promising future for its people. The international approach must be comprehensive and every instrument of international power must be applied. The military is only a part of the solution in Afghanistan. The ISAF campaign plan consists of three lines of operation: Security, Governance and Reconstruction and Development. The Afghan National Security Forces are the most legitimate forces to provide security for Afghans; hence, they should hold and sustain security in the Afghan villages after the insurgency is cleared. The OMLT program is a NATO ISAF measure to assist building the ANA along the security line of operation, in order to allow the Afghans to win in Afghanistan. The OMLT program is connecting people in Afghanistan, making NATO member forces more interoperable on tactical level. The OMLT program also serves as a change agent for military development in each nation providing forces to the program. The OMLTs are important to the ISAF Commander's exit strategy. NATO should rise to the occasion and provide the number of certified OMLTs required in order to comprehensively assist the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to bring the ANA up to operating capability.

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My motivation for choosing the subject of building an Afghan National Army springs from my own experience as a mentor as well as my passion for improving my situational understanding of the contemporary operational environment in Afghanistan. Furthermore, training indigenous forces has been, is and will be a decisive task in future stability operations in order to facilitate the ability of the host nation to provide security for its own population.

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ACRONYMS

ANA	Afghan National Army
ANBP	Afghan National Border Patrol
ANCOP	Afghan National Civil Order Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
ANP	Afghan National Police
AO	Area of Operations
C2	Command and Control
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
CJTF-82	Combined Joint Task Force-82
CM	Capability Milestone
COE	Contemporary Operational Environment
COIN	Counterinsurgency
COM ISAF	Commander of the International Security and Assistance Force
CSI	Combat Studies Institute
CSTC-A	The Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan
CTAG	Combined Training Advisory Group
DATES	Directorate for Afghan National Army Training and Equipment Support
ETT	Embedded Training Team
EU	European Union
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FSO	Full Spectrum Operations
GOP	Guidelines for Operational Planning

GWoT	Global War on Terrorism
HN	Host Nation
HQ	Headquarters
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JCMB	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board
JFTC	Joint Force Training Center
JMRC	Joint Multinational Readiness Center
KANDAK	Battalion (Pashtu for battalion)
LI	Lessons Identified
LL	Lessons Learned
MA	Military Assistance
MASD	Military Assistance Security and Development
MCO	Major Combat Operations
MDMP	Military Decision Making Process
MOD	Ministry of Defense
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDS	National Defense Strategy
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OMLT	Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
RC	Regional Command
SG	Secretary-General
SHAPE	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
RIP	Relief-in-Place

ROE	Rules of Engagement
SO	Stability Operations
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TF Phoenix	Task Force Phoenix
TTP	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
U.S.	United States

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The most important military component of the struggle against violent extremists is not the fighting we do ourselves, but how well we help prepare our partners to defend and govern themselves. (U.S. Department of Defense 2008, 8)

The establishment of security and prosperity within Afghanistan is a means of promoting security and prosperity in the region and the world. (Karzai 2002)

This is the fourth time in 150 years of Afghanistan's turbulent history that the country is recreating the state military following its total disintegration caused by foreign invasions or civil wars. (Jalali 2002)

Countries invest in their armies to protect their populations from internal and external threats. Afghanistan is no exception. A particular challenge for Afghanistan is that its army is being recreated for the fourth time in 150 years. The recreation of the Afghan National Army (ANA) requires a stable Afghan government and a long term commitment from the International community. The purpose of this thesis is to provide qualitative answers as to what extent the program designed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to assist the development of the ANA is effective and successful. The name of the program is the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) Program. This chapter presents the operational environment that encompasses the ANA development and describes the main contributors related to the ANA. This chapter also presents the research questions, the significance and the limitations of the thesis.

Afghanistan has suffered from intense conflict for nearly three decades.

Consequently, Afghanistan is a failed state and is totally reliant on foreign aid.

Afghanistan lacks a healthy, skilled workforce. "The United Nations (UN) Development Program notes that the country's Human Development Index "falls at the bottom of the

list of low human development countries” (at 172 of 177 countries). Furthermore, the population has the world's highest proportion of people suffering from disabilities caused by some of the millions of land mines still scattered in almost all areas of the country” (Jane`s Sentenial Country Risk Assesment 2008).

68% of the population has never known peace. Life expectancy is 44 years. It has the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world: One of six pregnant Afghan women dies for each live birth. Terrorist incidents and main force insurgent violence is rising (34% increase this year in kinetic events.) Battle action and casualties are now much higher in Afghanistan for US forces than they are in Iraq. The Afghan government at provincial and district level is largely dysfunctional and corrupt. The security situation (2.8 million refugees); the economy (unemployment 40% and rising, extreme poverty 41%, acute food shortages, inflation 12% and rising, agriculture broken); the giant heroin/opium criminal enterprise (\$4 billion and approximately a third of Afghanistan's total GDP); and Afghan governance are all likely to get worse in the coming 24 months (McCaffrey 2008, 3).

The difficult security situation in Afghanistan remains to be solved. The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, reports that the overall situation in Afghanistan has become more challenging over the past year. Despite the enhanced capabilities of both the ANA and the international forces, the security situation has deteriorated markedly. The number of security incidents rose to 983 in August 2008, which is the highest since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 and represents a 44 per cent increase compared with the same month in 2007 (UN Secretary General 2008, 1-5). The insurgency’s dependence on asymmetric tactics has also led to a sharp rise in the number of civilian casualties. Additionally, civilians are being killed as a result of military operations carried out by Afghan and international security forces, particularly in situations in which insurgents conceal themselves in populated areas.

While armed clashes between Afghan and international security forces on the one hand, and insurgents on the other, have continued to increase in number and intensity,

asymmetric attacks carried out by the insurgents have increased even more. The UN Secretary General stated in his report that “Three trends can be identified in the context of this deterioration: a greater focus by insurgent groups on hitherto stable areas; more sophisticated planning of operations by insurgents, in particular asymmetric attacks; and an increase in civilian casualties” (UN Secretary General 2008, 5). The United Nations Department of Safety and Security has assessed approximately 90 of almost 400 districts as areas of extreme risk. According to figures from the Government of Afghanistan, 12 districts are completely beyond its control.

The *Washington Post* reported “That over the past two years, the Taliban’s revival has fueled by fast growing popular dissatisfaction with Karzai’s government, which has failed to bring to services and security to much of the country” (Constable 2008, 12). Deepening public resentment against civilian deaths caused by the United States (U.S.) and NATO airstrikes is another factor.

The old Taliban wanted to bring Sharia, security and unity to Afghanistan. The new Taliban has much broader goals – to drive foreign forces out of the country and the Muslim world. The new Taliban movement has created a parallel government structure that includes defense and finance councils and appoints judges and officials in some areas. It operates Web sites and a 24-hour propaganda apparatus that spins every military incident faster than Afghan and Western officials can manage (Constable 2008).

Brigadier General Rickard Blanchette, the Chief spokesman for NATO forces in Afghanistan stated “We are definitely not winning the information war. Neither does the Taliban need to bother with the truth” (Constable 2008). Although civilian deaths have been frequent and real, officials say the Taliban quickly broadcasts exaggerated tolls, stoking public anger, while the International Security Forces in Afghanistan (ISAF) may take days to respond.

The Taliban today have a greater degree of formal organization. The new Taliban structure has councils for each area of governance. Former ISAF Commander General Dan K. McNeill estimated the military strength to be 10,000-20,000 Taliban fighters (McNeil 2008). The Afghan view on the Taliban in a nationwide poll arranged by several news agencies reported “Despite the Taliban’s very negative reputation – and partly linked to perceptions of its strength – 60 percent of Afghans say the Karzai government should negotiate a settlement in which Taliban leaders would be allowed to hold political office in exchange for laying down their arms” (Cordesman 2008, 70). This argument is supported by the UK’s senior commander in Helmand, Brigadier Mark Carleton-Smith, who says “If the Taliban were prepared to sit on the other side of the table and talk about a political settlement, then that’s precisely the sort of progress that concludes insurgencies like this” (BBC News 2008). Furthermore, Brigadier Mark Carleton-Smith, who is the Commander of 16 Air Assault Brigade, which has just completed its second tour of Afghanistan, argued that “We’re (NATO) not going to win this war. It’s about reducing it to a manageable level of insurgency that’s not a strategic threat and can be managed by the Afghan Army” (BBC News 2008).

Security is fundamental for good governance and development. Without a secure environment, no or only slow progress can evolve. Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) consists of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police (ANP). One year and one day after al-Qaida demolished the World Trade Center, President Hamid Karzai stated before the 57th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York that “We are realistic about countless challenges and problems that we are confronted with. Foremost among these is security, which is the principal demand

of the Afghan people, and the most fundamental requirement for sustainable peace. It is our position that the real key to the restoration of sustainable security lies in the creation of a national army and a national police” (Karzai 2002).

The reform and rebuilding of the ANP has been slow and not particularly successful. In September 2008, some 70 per cent of the 82,000-strong force is estimated to be present for duty (UN Secretary General 2008, 7). The ANP is the only security force that maintains a durable presence in communities across Afghanistan. However, its shortcomings with regard to training and equipping have serious effects. The new Taliban offers innocent and poor boys money and better weapons than those of the ANP. Another weakness of the system is that police officers are recruited locally and are attached to the provincial authorities. Furthermore, corruption remains a huge problem. There are credible reports of police positions, particularly in lucrative transit and drug trafficking corridors, being “sold” for large amounts of money. A weak, ineffective or distrusted police force becomes an obstacle to implementing an effective counter-insurgency effort, combating crime and ensuring respect for rule of law, securing a stable government presence in unstable provinces and keeping vital highways safe and accessible.

On December 1, 2002, President Karzai issued a decree announcing the creation of an all volunteer Afghan National Army to include citizens of all social ethnic origins. Great care has been taken to ensure the ANA is comprised of soldiers from all of Afghanistan’s major ethnic groups - Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara, Turkmen, etc., - and balanced according to the country’s national averages. “The five ANA corps serve as regional commands that include the 201st Corps based in Kabul, 203rd Corps in Gardez, 205th Corps in Kandahar, 207th Corps in Herat and the 209th Corps in Mazar-e-Sharif.

These regional commands put a permanent ANA presence in every region of Afghanistan and they clearly demonstrate to the Afghan people and to the international community that Afghan national government authority extends throughout the nation” (CSTC-A 2008). The ANA corps structure mirrors the organization of ISAF Regional Command (RC) structure and shares the same Areas of Operations (AO), which is beneficial in facilitating communication, coordination and cooperation on joint training and operations. The ANA includes five ground maneuver corps and one air corps and has, as of September 2008 reached strength of more than 62,000 (UN Secretary General 2008, 6). The ANA is a national institution, respected by the Afghan people and viewed by them as a strong symbol of national unity.

Following a request by the Minister of Defense of Afghanistan, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), agreed on September 9, 2008 to raise the recruitment ceiling from 88,000 to 134,000 by 2012, reflecting the readiness of the Government of Afghanistan to gradually take greater responsibility for the security of the country (U.S. Department of Defense 2008). Afghan officials reportedly think that even an army 134,000-strong will not be enough to face the challenges and defeat the insurgents. In fact, Afghan Defense Minister Abdur Rahim Wardak, who knows the threats his country faces better than anyone else, repeated many times that 60-70,000 troops would not be able to end the Taliban threat and defend the county from external forces. “Wardak indicated that an army of at least 150-200,000 is required to do the job. Therefore, the key to the end of the war is a strong, large and determined Afghan National Army” (Ertan 2008). Considering the facts with regards to the growing insurgency and the necessary size of the Afghan National Army to counter the

insurgency, the United States and NATO have no credible option but to support increasing the size of the Afghan army. How and when this can be achieved will determine the outcome of the Afghan war and the success of the Coalition forces.

NATO is an alliance of 26 countries from North America and Europe committed to fulfilling the goals of the North Atlantic Treaty signed in Washington, D.C., on April 4, 1949. NATO provides a forum for North American and European countries to consult on security issues of common concern and take joint corrective action. NATO is an intergovernmental organization in which each member country retains its sovereignty. NATO decisions are made jointly by the member countries based on consensus. After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), a counterterrorist operation in Afghanistan. OEF is carried out under the authority of the Commander, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), and is represented in Afghanistan by Combined Joint Task Force-82 (CJTF-82) (U.S. Department of Defense Office of Inspector General 2008, i).

The UN established NATO ISAF in 2001. The ISAF mission is to conduct military operations to assist the Government of Afghanistan in establishing and maintaining a safe and secure environment. NATO ISAF conducts these operations with the ANSF to assist in extending Government authority and influence, to help with Afghanistan's reconstruction, and to contribute to regional stability (U.S. Department of Defense Office of Inspector General 2008, 2). ISAF, which now numbers 55,000 troops, is helping to bring security and stability and to foster development in Afghanistan. The ISAF Commander, General McKiernan, has assumed responsibility for non-ISAF forces of the United States of America in Afghanistan, improving unity of command. ISAF's

key military tasks in practice include assisting the Afghan government in extending its authority across the country, conducting stability and security operations in co-ordination with the Afghan national security forces; mentoring and supporting the Afghan National Army; and supporting Afghan government programs to disarm illegally armed groups (NATO 2007). The mission of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A), in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and the international community, is “to plan, program and implement structural, organizational, institutional and management reforms of the Afghanistan National Security Forces in order to develop a stable Afghanistan, strengthen the rule of law, and deter and defeat terrorism within its borders” (CSTC-A 2007). CSTC-A is under the control of CENTCOM. Under CSTC-A’s operational control is Task Force Phoenix (TF Phoenix) responsible for training, mentoring and advising the ANA and the ANP.

The OMLT Program is a key contribution by NATO’s ISAF mission towards developing the ANA. The OMLTs are embedded in ANA Battalions (called “Kandaks” in Pashtu), Brigades, Garrisons & Corps HQs. The OMLTs provide training and mentoring to support ANA units’ operational deployments and provide a liaison capability between ANA and ISAF forces, coordinating the planning of operations and ensuring that the ANA units receive enabling support. The Corps HQ and Garrison OMLTs do not deploy from their assigned locations. On the other hand, the Brigade and Kandak OMLTs deploy throughout Afghanistan with their ANA partner units. OMLT personnel deploy for periods of at least 6 months in order to build enduring relationships with the ANA and maximize the mentoring effect.

OMLT training is a three-phase process, consisting of national training, NATO pre-deployment training, and in-theatre training. Canada, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom (UK), and United States have contributed full OMLTs/ETTs (embedded training teams) while Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom have contributed personnel to multinational OMLTs/ETTs (NATO 2007).

The challenges in the contemporary operational environment in Afghanistan are multiple and serious. “Afghan face and Afghan pace” is a common expression used by NATO personnel in Afghanistan: promoting the ANA as the primary, legitimate security provider serves as an excuse, albeit a poor one, for the absence of security progress. The Afghan people need to experience a safe and secure environment; that is the only way they will gain hope for the future. “NATO has yet to meet its commitment for training the ANA and must do better, both in quantity and quality” (US EUCOM 2008, 28). NATO is in a squeeze to provide efficient support to the OMLT mission. More than 14 NATO countries are contributing with personnel to this mission, while other NATO countries have offered to field personnel in the long term perspective. U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates said in October 2007 that “72 non-U.S OMLTs will be needed in Afghanistan by the summer of 2008. Today, there are commitments for about 36” (U.S. Department of Defense 2007). Furthermore, Secretary Gates said at the same meeting that “There’s solid agreement on the importance of succeeding in Afghanistan. No one doubts the justice or necessity of the alliance mission in Afghanistan. What we need now are actions, deeds and a sense of urgency and commitment to back up our pledges and

promises.” Considering the fact that the ANA will nearly double in size over the next five years to more than 134,000 active duty troops, this thesis takes as its premise that: “NATO should rise to the occasion and provide the number of certified OMLTs required in order to comprehensively assist the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to bring the ANA up to operating capability.”

Research Questions

The primary research question is: Is the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) program the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National Army? Six secondary questions address the significance of the OMLT program from various perspectives. The first two of these questions relate to the military skill set a mentor must possess to be an effective ANA mentor. Hence, the first secondary research question addresses *individual* competencies: what are the core competencies for an OMLT mentor on corps and brigade level to master in order to be successful in the operational environment? The secondary research question addresses *team* competencies: What are the core competencies for an infantry Kandak level OMLT to be successful in the operational environment? The third and fourth research questions are about the advantages and limitations of the United States versus the NATO approach regarding Kandak OMLTs. Consequently: What are the *advantages* of the coalition composition of OMLTs versus U.S Military Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) regarding developing the ANA? And: What are the comparative *limitations* of the coalition’s composition of OMLTs versus U.S Military Embedded Training Teams for the mission of developing the ANA? The fifth research question addresses the different limits of engagements for troops from various countries (also called caveats) as well as command

and control issues that are affecting the OMLT program: What are the national restrictions within NATO that have to be resolved or renegotiated to improve the efficiency of the OMLT program? Finally, the sixth research question relates to the end state where the ANA is capable of operating independently: What is the end state for an effective ANA when its most focusing mission is counterinsurgency (COIN) operations on company levels or lower?

Significance

First and in a short term-perspective, the conclusion and recommendations of this thesis aim at providing important knowledge to future NATO OMLTs to set them up for success as mentors. Second, and as a consequence of the first, it is hoped these findings will improve the OMLTs ability to assist ANA in developing into a self-sufficient army. Beyond Afghanistan, there are other global challenges that may call for the employment of OMLTs or similar forces. Population growth in the developing world will increase opportunities for future instability. Populations of some less-developed countries in Africa, the Middle East and in Asia will almost double by 2020. Most likely, we will see more failed or failing states. Assistance in nation building from the Western world will be called upon, including building security forces. Therefore, the desired outcome of this research is to provide a foundation for “best practice” in terms of what kind of composition of military forces from the Western world can assist in developing security forces effectively in the future.

Limitations

Initially, two important limitations seem to be beyond control of the author: First, there is information that cannot be used in this thesis due to classification. Consequently, the fact that classified information cannot be used as evidence could decrease the validity of the thesis. Second, the OMLT program was implemented only two years ago in 2006. Knowing the timelines for modernization of armies in the Western world, one can understand that to build an army from the bottom is a long term commitment. Fundamental organizational changes require hard work and it takes a long time to achieve positive results. Hence, there is a risk for drawing premature conclusions. Finally, the cut-off date for fact finding for this thesis was January 20, 2009 which was the Inauguration Day for President Obama as the President of the United States of America.

Delimitations

The Afghan National Security Forces encompass the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police, the Afghan National Border Patrol (ANBP), and the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP). The United States and NATO ISAF have since 2006 taken a comprehensive approach to developing all of them simultaneously, by and large by OMLT programs. However, this thesis seeks to focus on the OMLT program for the ANA only, in order to provide a research project with proper depth.

Summary

A synchronized and comprehensive approach including all instruments of international power (Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic) is required to provide a self-sustainable Afghanistan. The UN and the European Union (EU) must take

on more responsibility for economic development and institution-building. In March 2008, the UN established a coordinating element to synchronize security, governance and reconstruction in Kabul. Upon request from Afghan President Karzai, the UN's envoy to Afghanistan will work closely with the Afghan government to ensure that it has as much control as possible over the co-ordination of foreign and domestic organizations.

Governance and development demand sufficient security. NATO's mandate is to protect the Afghan people. Hence, support to the ANA is one of NATO-ISAF's key military tasks, because an effective ANA is critical to building a self-sustaining Afghanistan. Afghan people throughout the country must be able to see and experience more concrete results of and benefits from the assistance that they hear has been pledged to their country. They must see that corruption is being punished and competence rewarded. Civilians must be protected, not only from terrorism and insurgency, but also from unintended consequences of pro-Government military operations. They must be given a stronger sense of confidence in the international community, both civilian and military, and especially in their own Government.

The Way Ahead

This thesis consists of four chapters in addition to the present introduction and overview. Chapter 2 provides the literature review and forms the baseline for the research in this thesis. Open sources and documents that can shed light on the ISAF OMLT program in Afghanistan will be presented. Chapter 3 reflects the framework and methodology used for research in pursuing whether the OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National Army. Chapter 4 presents the analyses of the primary and the six secondary research

questions discussed in the previous paragraph. Finally, Chapter 5 provides the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITTERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

If anyone has to die for Afghanistan, it must not be the children of foreign nations. It must be our sons, and they are ready to do so. But they must be given a fair chance to be able to fight for their country. They must be properly armed and trained.

Afghan Commander

The OMLTs live, train and fight with the Afghan National Army. Operating on the same principles that our grandfathers who worked in the tribal areas would understand, they share the same dangers and teach and lead by example.

General Sir Richard Dannatt
UK Chief of the General Staff

The primary research question is whether the OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National Army. The previous chapter established the background for this thesis and introduced an overview of the operational environment in Afghanistan. Furthermore, chapter 1 briefly described the facts and figures of trainers from the countries contributing to the ANA development. The purpose of this chapter is to pave the way for the analysis in chapter 4, to illuminate the subject for the reader by discussing and critiquing the topic addressed by others, summarize relevant prior research as well as identifying gaps in extant knowledge. This chapter is organized in four sections based on the topics of emphasis. The first section explores the security challenges, future trends and the COE. The second section addresses the challenges to army transformation in general and more specifically in regards of developing the ANA structure and capabilities to balance the ability to fight future Major Combat Operations (MCO) and/or conduct Stability Operations (SO). The third section focuses on doctrine for training Foreign Internal Defense forces (FID). The

fourth section discusses the theoretical baseline for the competencies required for mentors teaching and coaching the ANA leadership and staff officers on corps and brigade level as well as team mentors on battalion level within the OMLT program.

The scope of literature that reflects upon the specific themes listed above is extensive. The challenge has been to choose reliable information from credible sources that contribute with substantial breadth and depth and hence provides valuable input for this thesis. Thus, the literature review comprises factual analysis from a wide range of recognized organizations and individuals as well as personal opinions in order to present the most authoritative works in the field and to express a balanced overview.

Security Challenges, Future Trends and the Contemporary Operational Environment

A common situational understanding of current security challenges in the international arena and specifically the COE in Afghanistan is crucial for appropriately developing and employing the military instrument of national power. The U.S. National Defense Strategy (NDS) addresses the spectrum of challenges the United States, her allies and partners face; these include violent transnational extremist networks, hostile states armed with weapons of mass destruction, rising regional powers, emerging space and cyber space, natural and pandemic disasters and a growing competition for resources (U.S. Department of Defense 2008, Introduction). An international and comprehensive approach is required to successfully cope with these challenges while anticipating and preparing for those of tomorrow. Hence, old alliances must be strengthened and new partnerships must be built to face the challenges of the 21st century. Moreover, the international community must continue to improve the understanding of trends and how

they interact in order to reduce uncertainty and prepare for proper response and management. The military should develop capability and capacity to hedge against uncertainty by being able to conduct full spectrum operations (U.S. Department of Defense 2008, 9).

General (Ret.). Sir Rupert Smith is considered to be one of the most recognized sources regarding characterization of modern warfare. He has served in East and South Africa, Arabia, the Caribbean, Europe and Malaysia. General Smith is one of the most senior international practitioners in the use of force. In his forty year career in the British Army, he commanded the UK Armored Division in the 1990-1991 Gulf War, commanded the UN forces in Bosnia in 1995, was General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland 1996-1999, and then served as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander in NATO. He retired in 1992. General Smith is the author of *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* which is a treatise on modern warfare that explains why the best military forces in the world win their battles but lose the wars. He argues that the reason for losing the wars is due to the paradigm change in military activity, from interstate industrial war to the paradigm identified in the book as “war amongst the people” a situation in which an outcome cannot be resolved directly by military force (Smith 2005, 3).

On the other hand, the professional head of the British Army, Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Richard Dannatt disagrees with General Smith. At the risk of going against the flow of public opinion, General Dannatt argues “in accepting what Rupert said we run the risk of a binary response, and life is not that straight-forward” (Dannatt 2008, 3-8). Moreover, General Dannatt argues that the position we find ourselves in is

nothing new, in fact the debate of how the armies should look in order to fight current and future campaigns has been unchanged for the last 150 years. Furthermore, General Dannatt claims that there is no new type of war, we are in a continuum, and we have been in that continuum for several generations. Hence, the General's key point is that one should not accept that the army should be either one thing or the other, but simultaneously prepare for MCO and SO of the future, whilst meeting the demands of being able to succeed on current operations. In this context, General Dannatt argues that "the most likely is the most demanding and therefore we must continue to optimize for the most likely, which is stability operations, whilst maintaining our ability to dual role and meet the demands of MCO, while remembering that on the lowest level fighting can be very intense whatever label you have applied on the operation" (Dannatt 2008, 7).

General Dannatt strongly believes that the armies the West is developing now have to be physically and mentally prepared to be engaged in the struggle against extremism for a long time arguing that "if the Second World War defined its generation, then this will be the conflict that defines this generation" (UK Ministry of Defence 2007). In order to prepare the UK Army for the challenges of the future, General Dannatt says "first, we must continue to develop doctrine, education and ethos such as will thrive in being able to look at a problem from first principles." Citing the need to further develop free thinking commanders who can recognise what kind of problems they face and then take original action to deal with them, Dannatt argues that it is possible that we might need to recruit and develop an entirely different type of officer for different roles. Looking to the current campaign in Afghanistan and to future campaigns, he presents important questions such as whether we have identified all those whom we should be

cultivating as linguists, and whether we need to start training people now? He further asks how we can educate people in cultural understanding as part of their career progression. General Dannatt is thinking “outside the box” when he suggests that perhaps there is a case for an officer or NCO spending significant periods of time with other government departments. ”Why not have a captain spending two years with Department of Foreign Affairs before returning to a deployment in Afghanistan to work in reconstruction?” Furthermore, “why not have a lieutenant who specialises in police mentoring deployed to Afghanistan for a two year period, with proper training and career progression” (UK Ministry of Defence 2007)?

A UK Army study is currently looking at the feasibility of forming permanent cadres of stabilization specialists. Discussing *The Land Environment- Moving Towards 2018* at the Future Land Warfare Conference in June 2008, General Dannatt explains that “these small units would specialise in the training and mentoring of indigenous forces, the type of tasks conducted by the OMLTs in Afghanistan or MiTTs in Iraq” (Dannatt 2008, 6). He is a spokesperson for the need to develop Defence niche capabilities for what is now being called Military Assistance, Security and Development tasks (MASD), claiming this is a new and emerging military task. According to General Dannatt’s vision, these small units should form the spine of our enduring cultural education and understanding. He envisages “a multi-disciplined and international organization capable of both fighting alongside local forces, and delivering reconstruction and development tasks in areas where the civil agencies cannot operate” (Dannatt 2008, 7).

The U.S. NDS gives clear guidance how to “win our Nation’s wars” by stating that “although improving the U.S. Armed Forces’ proficiency in irregular warfare is the

Defense Department's top priority, the United States does not have the luxury of preparing exclusively for such challenges" (U.S. Department of Defense 2008, 13). Furthermore, the United States must maintain the edge in the conventional forces. The NDS discusses the fact that the capabilities of the partners of the United States vary across the mission areas. The United States relies on many partners for low-risk missions such as peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance, whereas COIN and high-end conventional operations most likely will draw fewer partners with the capacity, will, and capability to act in support of mutual objectives. Importantly, the United States will continue to "support, train, advise, and equip partner security forces to counter insurgencies, terrorism, proliferation, and other threats" (U.S. Department of Defense 2008, 15).

NATO will most likely consist of 30 countries when celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2009. Historically, alliances were short term arrangements of convenience, designed to counter a specific opponent, and once that opponent was defeated they would wither away. NATO is different, resting on a timeless logic that Europe and North America need to meet common security challenges together. During NATO's first phase, the Cold War, focus was on territorial defense. In the second phase, which emerged from the end of the Cold War, NATO started its change process, reached out to former adversaries and developed the Partnership for Peace (PfP) mechanism to enhance cooperation between NATO and non-NATO countries. The third phase of NATO's evolution started with the terrorist attacks on 9/11 in 2001, which was the kick off for focusing beyond the boundaries of Europe. On June 12, 2008, NATO's Secretary-General (SG) Jaap de Hoop Scheffer argued that NATO has taken the challenge of

change, realizing that the third phase may be the most demanding. Moreover, long-term security and stability requires more than transformation of NATO's military forces in terms of new hardware. It also requires a mental transformation (NATO SG 2008, 4).

On the other hand, as brilliantly pointed out by U.S. Army LTC Cardoni working at the Joint Force Training Center (JFTC) in Bydgoszcz, Poland, whose mission is to support training for NATO and Partner forces to improve joint and combined tactical interoperability, "we have about 13 different Centers of Excellence in NATO, none of which addresses COIN. To me, that is almost criminal" (Cardoni 2008). Thus, one can question NATO's ability to adapt to the characteristics of the COE and modern warfare characterized by the two British gentlemen referred to in the previous paragraphs. The NATO SG argues that "we are moving NATO's defense and military transformation forward, with new capabilities and more adaptive planning and funding mechanisms" (NATO SG 2008, 3). Nevertheless, the majority of NATO forces do not have expeditionary capability. In fact, less than 40% of NATO forces are deployable. Therefore, although realizing that NATO is a political alliance, the author dares to claim that NATO in 2008 has not yet sufficiently adopted its structure or mindset to the fact that NATO's strategic environment has been global for the last 7 years. Hence, it is a timely question to raise if NATO is capable of being a learning organization and adapting before it is too late to stabilize Afghanistan and the deteriorating security situation spreads further to the wider region.

NATO's mission in Afghanistan is NATO's first "out of area" mission beyond Europe and a test of the Alliance's political will and military capabilities. The purpose of the mission in Afghanistan is stabilization and reconstruction. The principle mechanism

to rebuild the country is the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) which are charged with the extending the reach of the Government of Afghanistan by improving governance and rebuilding the country (NATO ISAF 2008). However, the military commitment remains paramount if security in the country is to improve so that reconstruction can proceed across the whole country. On the other hand, President Karzai has with growing strength raised concerns about the international PRTs and private security firms becoming “parallel” entities to local government and security forces (CNN 2008).

NATO's mission is also a test of United States leadership of the Alliance. According to Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress: *NATO in Afghanistan: A test of the Transatlantic Alliance*, some allies have questioned whether the United States commitment to the interest of the allies preserves the mutual sense of obligation that characterizes the alliance. The allies also believe that the United States must provide leadership and resources to counter the destabilizing influences upon Afghanistan of the two neighboring states, Iran and Pakistan (CRS 2008, 2). An open question still circulating in Europe is why the United States deployed 150,000 troops to Iraq and only 20% of that number to Afghanistan, which in fact harbored the terrorists who planned and carried out the 9/11 attacks and consequently commenced what the author will characterize as World War IV, the Global War on Terrorism (GWoT). Naturally, all governments have their home audiences and own national political agendas which can differ from the agenda of the alliance and the nation receiving assistance, in this case, Afghanistan. As a result, the choice of fighting a secondary war in Afghanistan has until now had severe consequences which urgently need to be handled properly before it is too late.

With more than 60,000 forces under NATO command in total, only 20,000 soldiers are deployed to Afghanistan. The United States and partner countries now deploy a 44,000 troop NATO led ISAF that command peacekeeping throughout Afghanistan. Of those, about 14,500 of the 33,600 U.S. forces in Afghanistan is a part of ISAF, the remainder (about 19,600) are operating under the Operation Enduring Freedom mandate. The United States and partner nations also run 26 regional enclaves to secure reconstruction (Provincial Reconstruction Teams, PRTs), and are building Afghan National Security Forces now numbering about 150,000 (CRS 2008, Summary).

The central government of Afghanistan is perceived as weak, corrupt and unresponsive to the need of the Afghan people, causing disillusionment across the country. According to the CRS Report for Congress: *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security and U.S. Policy*, United States and outside assessments of the effort to stabilize Afghanistan are increasingly negative. Top U.S. commanders say they are not sure the effort is “winning.” The report draws a dark picture of the security situation, pointing out a growing sense of insecurity in areas around Kabul previously considered secure and an increased number of civilian and military deaths. As a side comment, the ANA took over security of Kabul regional command from Italy in August 2008. According to both the official United States and European evaluations, Pakistan`s failure to prevent Taliban and other militant infiltration into Afghanistan is the main cause of the security deterioration. According to the CRS report, important steps such as “adding U.S. troops to the Afghan theater, consolidating the command structure for U.S. and partner forces, planning a major expansion of the ANA, and attempting to accelerate development activities to

support for the Afghan government” were the recommendations from the Bush Administration to the Obama Administration.

David Kilcullen, Ph.D. is a contemporary practitioner and theorist of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism. A former Australian Army officer, he left that army as a lieutenant colonel in 2005, has advised British and Australian governments and now works for the United States State Department. He was most recently the special adviser for counterinsurgency to the United States Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. During 2007 he served in Iraq as Senior Counterinsurgency Adviser, Multi-National Force Iraq, a civilian position on the personal staff of U.S. Army General David H. Petraeus, responsible for planning and executing the 2007-8 Joint Campaign Plan, which drove the Iraq War troop “surge” of 2007 (Small Wars Journal 2009). In the article *Kilcullen on Afghanistan: “It’s Still Winnable, But Only Just”* Kilcullen emphasizes that the United States and her partners have been both out-fought and out-governed by the insurgents for four basic reasons: (1) Failure to protect the Afghan people by focusing too much on attacking an elusive enemy and too little on improving the security for the people. (2) Failure of dealing with the Taliban’s political base and operational support system operating from the Pakistani sanctuary. (3) Failure of the Afghan government to deliver legitimate and good governance to Afghans at the local level, leaving a vacuum effectively filled by the new Taliban. (4) Neither the allies in Afghanistan nor the Afghans are organized, staffed or resourced to secure the people, deal with the safe havens and provide good governance locally. Kilcullen blames these failures on poor coalition management and the fact that “the U.S. only has given episodic attention to the war” (*The New Yorker* 2008). Finally, Kilcullen suggests that rather than chasing the

enemy, the key solution to solve the negative situation is to “use the Afghan National Army and police, with mentors and support from us, as well as Special Forces teams, to secure the other major population centers.”

In the article *Fight Terror at Its Roots*, President Karzai argues that the war on terrorism can only be won by a regional approach, not by fighting in Afghan villages. President Karzai criticizes the international community for its lack of knowledge or lack of will in not concentrating more efforts to the sanctuaries where Al Qaida or Taliban train, equip and motivate extremists to conduct terror. Hence, he claims that “the West has been fighting the symptoms of terrorism, but failed to attack its underlying causes.” In conclusion of the article, Karzai makes clear that young Afghans can only learn to feel hope when the Government of Afghanistan can bring them a secure life, “free from the danger of bombs and aerial bombardment.” Furthermore, a safer life for the Afghans depends on removal of political backing for radicalism and on help for the desperate (*Miami Herald* 2008).

In addition, the UN Secretary-General (SG) emphasizes the seriousness of the security situation in his report *The Situation in Afghanistan and Its Implications for International Peace and Security* to the General Assembly’s Security Council. The UN SG says that “success in Afghanistan will ultimately depend on our ability to bring about a “*political surge*” that musters the political determination to address those areas in which international and Afghan efforts have been insufficient, and to accelerate progress where gains have been made.” Furthermore, the Afghans must be given a stronger sense of confidence in the international community, both civilian and military, and especially in their own Government. The UN SG also points out the importance of protecting civilians,

not only from terrorism and insurgency, but also from unintended consequences of pro-Government military operations (UN Secretary General 2008, 15). In 2008, Afghanistan suffered its worst violence since U.S. led and Afghan forces overthrew the Taliban in 2001, with at least 4,000 people killed, about a third of them civilians (*Washington Times* 2008). President Karzai has repeatedly blamed the West for the worsening security in Afghanistan, saying NATO failed to target Taliban and al Qaeda sanctuaries in Pakistan and calling for the war to be taken out of Afghan villages. The issue of conducting military operations resulting in civilian casualties is a sore point between Afghanistan and its international partners.

Changing the Army

Leaders must lead their organizations to create permanent and successful change. The United States Army's definition of leadership in FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*, includes "the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization" (FM 6-22 2006, 1-2). The emphasis on *improving the organization* clearly places the requirement on leaders to perform the traditional requisites of leadership with a specific focus on improving their organizations. Additionally, FM 6-22 also states that one important organizational leader responsibility is to create an environment that enables and supports people within the organization to learn from their experiences and those of others (FM 6-22 2006, 11-5). For this reason, FM 6-22 provides the theoretical basis for discussing the core competencies for OMLT mentors on brigade and Corps level as well as providing the foundation for all mentors in order to create an environment that leverages institutional training, education and training in operational assignments and

self-development through feedback. The author will argue that these three critical sources of learning are valuable throughout any army soldier's career, no matter his nationality.

On the other hand, FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, addresses the common characteristics of insurgencies. The foreword lays out the expectations to every soldier to be nation builders as well as warriors. They must be prepared to help reestablish institutions and local security forces and assist in rebuilding infrastructure and basic services. FM 3-24 presents a list of both successful and unsuccessful counterinsurgency operational practices (see table 1 below). The author will highlight the practices of particular interest for the OMLT mission in Afghanistan during the analysis in Chapter 4.

Table 1. Successful and Unsuccessful Counterinsurgency Operational Practices

<i>Successful practices</i>	<i>Unsuccessful practices</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize intelligence. • Focus on the population, its needs, and its security. • Establish and expand secure areas. • Isolate insurgents from the populace (population control). • Conduct effective, pervasive, and continuous information operations. • Provide amnesty and rehabilitation for those willing to support the new government. • Place host-nation police in the lead with military support as soon as the security situation permits. • Expand and diversify the host-nation police force. • Train military forces to conduct counterinsurgency operations. • Embed quality advisors and special forces with host-nation forces. • Deny sanctuary to insurgents. • Encourage strong political and military cooperation and information sharing. • Secure host-nation borders. • Protect key infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overemphasize killing and capturing the enemy rather than securing and engaging the populace. • Conduct large-scale operations as the norm. • Concentrate military forces in large bases for protection. • Focus special forces primarily on raiding. • Place low priority on assigning quality advisors to host-nation forces. • Build and train host-nation security forces in the U.S. military's image. • Ignore peacetime government processes, including legal procedures. • Allow open borders, airspace, and coastlines.

Source: Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), Pg1-29.

The proper strategy to deal with the security situation in Afghanistan would be to institute a draft of Afghan men of military age, argues Ronald E. Neumann in the article *Afghans, Report for Duty* published in *The New York Times*. Neumann is the president of the American Academy of Diplomacy, was the American ambassador to Afghanistan from 2005 to April 2007 and hence has gained deep insight in the Afghan situation. According to his experience, a draft would make it possible to gather a much larger military force, and far more quickly, around the core professional force already in place.

He refers to historical examples which suggest it would be possible to organize the new, large Afghan force quickly. In the 1950s, during the Korean War, the United States helped build a 700,000-man army in a nation with a population only about two-thirds that of Afghanistan. Furthermore, in the 1940s, during the Greek civil war, the United States helped build a Greek security force of 182,000 soldiers in two years. Neumann realizes that these armies were not as sophisticated as the forces of today, and “they did not require new body armor, high-tech communications equipment and armored Humvees. But they were sufficient to overcome threats greater than those Afghanistan now faces” (Neumann 2008). Neumann suggests that foreign trainers would still be needed when the draft began. Therefore it would be important to challenge NATO partners to play a larger role in training the new troops. Related to the topic of this thesis, Neumann’s key point is that “the numbers of trainers needed would actually be smaller than the number of foreign battalions we currently need, but do not have, from NATO” (Neumann 2008). The United States should set the example and lead the way in providing additional trainers. As a result, the United States may well inspire NATO nations to see how adding trainers now could enable them to reduce their forces later (Neumann 2008). However, the author would question the quality of any army being developed during a period of less than a decade, due to the fact it takes a minimum of 15 years from recruitment to educate a qualified battalion commander in the western armies.

FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, argues that it is a prerequisite for commanders to early clarify their desired endstate for effective training programs that have short-, mid-, and long term effects in order to ensure long term success. Training Host Nation (HN) security forces is a slow and painstaking process and it seems to the author that the

process FM 3-24 recommends to develop HN security forces is based upon, or at least in line with Kotter's third step in the eight-stage change process model. According to FM 3-24, HN security forces should in the short term focus on COIN operations, and on integrating military capabilities with those of local, regional, and national police. Second, maintain the flexibility to transition to more conventional roles of external and internal defense, based on long-term requirements. It seems to be a gap in theoretical guidance that provides a detailed description for when or what set of conditions are favorable for a transition from COIN to conventional focus. On the other hand, and common to all militaries, taking into account that there are different nuances in different countries, the desired endstate consists of a set of the following military characteristics: "Well trained HN security forces should provide reasonable levels of security from external threats while not threatening regional security, (2) Provide reasonable levels of internal security without infringing upon the populace's civil liberties or posing a coup threat, (3) Be founded upon the rule of law and (4) Be sustainable by the host nation after U.S. and multinational forces depart" (FM 3-24 2006, 6-6).

Full Spectrum Operations (FSO) is the U.S. Army's operational concept to meet the challenges of the current and future operational environment. The essence of FSO is:

Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results. Army forces employ synchronized action—lethal and nonlethal—proportionate to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding of all dimensions of the operational environment. (FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*)

Hence, through stability operations, military forces help to set the conditions those enable the actions of the other instruments of national power to succeed in achieving the broad

goals of conflict transformation. The efforts of providing security provide a foundation for transferring the responsibility for civilian control to the HN (FM 3-07 2008, 2-1). FM 3-07 defines the role of military forces in the reform of the security sector as to begin establishing and training host-nation forces within a comprehensive reform program as the situation and conditions of the operational environment allow. Moreover, as the HN forces train and validate their capabilities, the HN security forces begin to conduct operations and to assume responsibility for security. Finally, “the supporting, external military forces reduce their level of operations and supervision, and civil authorities assume full responsibility for security sector functions” (Department of The Army 2008, 6-25).

FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, discusses the role of the HN military, stating that primarily, military forces are developed to counter external threats. Only in special cases, should the military be countering certain types of internal military threats (FM 3-07 2008, 6-70). Hence, it seems to the author to be a doctrinal gap between FM 3-07 and FM 3-24 regarding what tasks to prioritize regarding training HN military during stability operations; should initial focus be on domestic COIN operations or on building HN military capability and capacity to provide national defense against external threats? Furthermore, FM 3-07 argues that external organizations are executing Security Sector Reform (SSR) and the individuals assigned to them are selected for their specific abilities to train and advise the developing force. For example, military police should help develop military police forces (FM 3-07 2008, 6-70). Theoretically, the author agrees with the doctrinal approach. Unfortunately for Afghanistan and the Afghan government’s ability to provide national security to her population, and as this thesis will discuss in-

depth during the analysis in chapter 4, the situation is exactly the opposite; the ANA is three years ahead of the development of the ANP.

Rebuilding the ANA is a highly cost-effective project, but also an expensive and lengthy endeavor. According to Ali Ahmad Jalali, the success of rebuilding the ANA is linked to three major variables: “the emergence of a legitimate broad-based government, the availability of resources, and time” (Jalali 2002, 85). Jalali is an Afghan American and a distinguished professor at the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies of the National Defense University, which is located in Washington, D.C. He is also the former Interior Minister of Afghanistan, having served from January 2003 to September 2005. He is a former colonel in the Afghan National Army and was a top military planner with the Afghan resistance following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He attended higher command and staff colleges in Afghanistan, the United States, Britain, and Russia, and has lectured widely. Jalali argues that to rebuild the ANA is not only an element of stabilizing the war devastated country but also a contribution to the United States led international war on terrorism in South and Central Asia.

Jalali provides fundamental knowledge of the military history of Afghanistan that is crucial for mentors of the ANA to understand. He argues that Afghan governments historically have relied on three types of military institutions in the evolution of the Afghan national armed forces: the regular army, tribal levies and community militias. The combination of these military institutions created a formidable force whose component supplemented each other's strengths and minimized their weaknesses. Afghanistan has throughout her history developed a national culture of guerilla warfare, defensive in nature and tactical in scope. Khushal Khan Khattak, the renowned 17th -

century Pashtun national leader and thinker clearly detailed the guerrilla tactics of the Afghan highlanders:

When you fight a smaller enemy detachment you should decisively attack with surprise. But, if the enemy receives reinforcement [or] when you encounter a stronger enemy force, avoid decisive engagement and swiftly withdraw only to hit back where the enemy is vulnerable. By this you gain sustainability and the ability to fight a long war of attrition. . . . A war of attrition eventually frustrates the enemy, no matter how strong he may be . . . and that gives a chance of victory to a small force fighting against an invading army. (Jalali 2002, 73)

Hence, to transform such an Afghan fighter into a soldier in a disciplined army is quite a challenge. The loyalty of an Afghan is first tribal, local and lastly governmental. Edward Hensman, a British observer of the Afghan society wrote in 1881:

The Afghan does not lack native courage, and in hill warfare he is unrivaled, so long as it takes the shape of guerrilla fighting. But once he is asked to sink his identity and to become merely a unit in a battalion, he loses all self-confidence and is apt to think more of getting away than of stubbornly holding his ground as he would have done with his own friends led by his own chief. (Hensman 1881, 329)

The Afghan state armies have throughout history basically faced two major challenges in such a social-political environment: “creating a national loyalty among the soldiers that would surpass their tribal allegiance, and providing the military units with the skills to fight effectively in both counterinsurgencies and conventional wars” (Jalali 2002, 75). According to Jalali, the major challenge for the Afghan government is to create an ANA loyal to the state. Thus, the future ANA must be nationally oriented, ethnically balanced, morally disciplined, professionally skilled, and operationally coherent. If the incentives are not attractive, the Afghan soldier longing for home will desert. As noted by the *CRS report to Congress in November 2008*, such personnel problems as desertion and absence without leave within the ANA are continuing.

Consequently, a typical ANA battalion is only at 50% of its authorized strength at any given time (CRS 2008a, 35). Thus, building the ANA requires extended time.

Furthermore, Jalali claims that recruitment for the regular Afghan army has always been difficult. Weak governmental control of the country and lack of resources have hindered both compulsory and voluntary enlistment. Also, a universal draft system was tried in 1941. However, the draft was an extremely unpopular system and was never fully implemented. Hence, the advice of the former American ambassador to Afghanistan from 2005 to April 2007 regarding the proposal to re-implement the draft might not be a suitable nor optimal solution for the Afghans.

Training Foreign Internal Defense Forces

Foreign internal defense is the participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization, to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. (Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff 2004, Introduction)

FID is characterized by involvement of all instruments of national power (diplomatic, information, military and economic means) used together to support a HN internal defense and development program. FID programs are joint and multinational in nature and thorough interagency coordination is a criterion for success. Furthermore, training to prepare for military operations to support FID requires that a broad range of areas be covered. The training also must be designed to support a mix of personnel, ranging from language-trained and culturally focused special operations forces (SOF) to those totally untrained in the specific area where the FID program is located. A combination of institutional and unit-conducted individual and collective training will be required (Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff 2004, Summary).

FID is used by a number of Western militaries, explicitly by the United States but sharing ideas with countries including France and the UK, to describe an approach to combating actual or threatened insurgency in a foreign state. FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, argues that training programs should be designed to prepare HN personnel to train themselves (FM 3-24 2006, 6-65). Since HN trainers are the best trainers, and should be used as much as possible; focus should initially be on train-the-trainer programs.

Table 6-4 in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, presents the following alternative training methods which have proven successful, of which some are more focused on enhancing the developing HN training capability in table 2 below.

Table 2. Methods of Training Host-nation Security Forces

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal schools initially run by U.S. forces with selected graduates returning as instructors. This includes entry-level individual training. • Mobile training teams to reinforce individual and collective training as needed. • Partnership training with U.S. forces tasked to train and advise host-nation units with whom they are partnered. U.S. forces support host-nation units. As training progresses, host-nation squads, platoons, and companies may work with their U.S. partners in security or combat operations. In this manner, the whole U.S. unit mentors their partners. Habitual training relationships should be maintained between partners until host-nation units meet standards for full capability. • Advisor teams detailed to assist host-nation units with minimal segregation between U.S. and host-nation personnel. Advisor teams work especially well in training senior ministry personnel. • U.S. personnel embedded in key positions in host-nation units. This may be required where host-nation security forces are needed but leader training is still in its early stages. This approach increases dependency on U.S. forces and should be used only in extreme circumstances. As host-nation capabilities improve, host-nation personnel should replace the embedded U.S. or multinational personnel. • Contractors can also be used to assist with training, though care is required to ensure the training is closely supervised and meets standards.

Source: Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), Pg 6-14.

However, the methods listed above are all American made and U.S Army oriented. The joint, interagency and international focus outlined in Joint Publication 3-7.01 - *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense* is not reflected. Furthermore, one can always criticize U.S Army for not providing sound military advice in advance of the military invasion of Afghanistan; in fact it took five years before FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, was produced and submitted to U.S Army troops. Nevertheless, NATO has yet to develop a NATO doctrine for FID and COIN. Hence, the NATO approach regarding how to address a comprehensive approach for training the ANA has since the establishment of the OMLT program in 2006 heavily leaned on the U.S. Army doctrine.

SOF has long been the lead organization in training and advising foreign armed forces. They focus on specific regions worldwide and study languages and cultures. Hence, SOF may be the ideal for some training and advisory roles but their limited number restrict their ability to carry out large scale missions to develop HN security forces (FM 3-24 2006, 6-13). The new trend is that the gap is filled with conventional forces.

The author is aware the existence of the *ETT/OMLT Handbook – the First 100 Days*, and *Tenets for Mentoring the ANA-OMLT operations*, both “made in the USA,” but they are both classified and therefore cannot be referred to in the development of this thesis. Neither has the author had access to these documents for the thesis compilation. However, the author has contacted the Norwegian Army Transformation and Doctrine Command who confirms that the two documents mentioned are actively used by the

Norwegian Kandak OMLT during the national mission-oriented training period prior to deployment (Prestegard 2008).

Individual and Team Competencies for Mentoring the ANA

In general, successful security force assistance requires thorough and continuous assessment and includes organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding and advising of the forces involved. Specifically related to the ANA, the OMLT program encompasses mainly training and advising. According to FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, advising HN units and institutions are key to the ultimate success of the security force assistance. For this reason, “advising HN units requires specifically selected and trained personnel to be effective” (FM 3-07 2008, 6-82). Furthermore, FM 3-07 discusses several imperatives for success, spanning from understanding the operational environment to information management (FM 3-07 2008, 6-83).

Several of the countries contributing in the OMLT program have lessons learned centers which documents operational experiences, mainly based on interviews after redeployment. The Canadian Army Lessons Learned Centre submits experiences externally through the Bulletin in order to share experiences that others might benefit from. According to *The Bulletin* Vol. 14 No. 1, a Canadian officer who was the OMLT Senior Brigade Mentor for 1st Brigade 205th Corps ANA (1-205) says “mentoring is inherently two-way, you will learn as much from the ANA leadership as they will learn from you. We can offer Canadian military competence and superb professional education and training, which coupled with their combat experience can make a potent combination” (*The Bulletin* 2008, Conclusion). Moreover, the U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute (CSI) archives first-hand, multi-service accounts of operational leadership

experiences from military personnel who planned, participated in and supported operations in the Global War on Terrorism. Hence, the author has access to operational experiences from U.S and even UK OMLT Mentors having served in all positions and on every level which are relevant for this thesis. As an example, a UK OMLT Mentor for an ANA battalion commander in 205th Corps says that “we had a pool of 20 interpreters, almost one per man on our team. They were a very good bridge between cultures and could point out the rights and the wrongs, the whys and the wherefores” (Combat Studies Institute 2007, 6). In addition, the author has gathered similar OMLT related research material from Norway, UK, Germany and the Netherlands. The relevance of these reports for this study will be presented in chapter 4, the analysis.

In OMLT and ETT training related matters, the author has collected basis for research by contacting training officers by e-mail from the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Germany who are responsible for Phase II collective training for Kandak OMLTs (Oliver 2008), the Joint Force Training Center in Poland (JFTC) who offers Corps- and Brigade OMLT training since October 13 (Cardoni 2008), 2008, as well as 1st Infantry Division, U.S Army who until lately, has annually put through ca 5000 service members for Transition Team (TT) Training at Fort Riley. According to the G3, 1st Infantry Division, LTC Patrick D. Frank, “the TTs live with the HN unit, eat with them, fight with them and care about them” (Frank 2008).

Summary and Conclusion

The literature review is extensive in breadth and depth, hence illuminating and discussing the subject for the reader. U.S. and UK militaries are considered to be the most powerful change agents who not only set the conditions for organizational change of their

own militaries, but also for NATO countries. The United States and the UK represent the authoritative and innovative schools of thought for military change in the Western world and their updated doctrines are studied by allies for adoption. Consequently, one can expect that NATO doctrine will not differ dramatically from the U.S. and UK doctrines. However, it is far easier to change a doctrine than to change the mindset of several generations of military officers currently operating on the international arena. Thus, it will take time to improve the ability of both political and military organizations to jointly figure out and apply the required comprehensive approach to solving current and future security issues, including balancing all of the instruments of power. “War amongst people” is dominating the contemporary operational environment and will most likely continue to dominate the future security challenges for the Western Armies. Hence, the Western militaries and NATO must adopt. Sooner is better, if not it is already too late for Afghanistan. Developing the ANA to assist the Afghan government to provide security Afghan wide is crucial for shaping a future it is possible for the Afghan population to believe in. However, the ANA supported by the ETTs and OMLTs, can only provide successful conditions: “It is with the other agencies, those that build nations and reform institutions, rescue and rehabilitate peoples where success is to be found” (Smith 2005).

Chapter 3 will explain the methodology applied in this thesis to analyze the extent the OMLT program is the appropriate model for a successful build up for an effective Afghan National Army. Chapter 4 presents the qualitative answers to the primary and the secondary research questions. Finally, the conclusion and the recommendations will be discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In short, the strengths of qualitative studies should be demonstrated for research that is exploratory or descriptive and that stresses the importance of context, setting, and the participants' frames of reference (Marshall & Rossman 1999, 58).

Chapter 3 reflects the framework and methodology used for research in pursuing whether the OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National Army. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the analysis necessary to formulate the conclusions and recommendations. Chapter 3 has four parts: the introduction, which establishes the foundation for the analysis methodology chosen, the presentation of the research design, the evaluation criteria which portray the details of the selected method and the summary which concludes the methodology chapter.

The first part of the study reflects the framework used for the research. Collecting data is a major part of any theses and the researcher must remember that method follows purpose. Due to this fact, the author will collect data from open information sources only. The information sources selected will depend upon what is available and unclassified. To answer the research questions most effectively, existing information will be used. As one of the most common sources of providing evaluative information, printed material with credibility of various sources will provide the bulk of the evidence.

The second part of the analysis examines the OMLT program through the lenses of a set evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria chosen to evaluate the OMLT program are the three principles of joint operations Restraint, Perseverance and Legitimacy

because these principles are the most applicable and relevant related to the OMLT program and they contribute to limit the extension of the thesis.

There are two research designs in social science. Although the difference is not black and white, the following characteristics are most common in general. The quantitative research design is characterized by a desire to establish cause-effect relationships, produce generalizeable results and provide quantitative data through data collection procedures. The equally recognized model is the qualitative research design which seeks to explore situations in- depth in order to understand more complex social conditions (Taylor-Powell 1996, 4). The main difference between them is that the quantitative research design requires all the information to be collected before the researcher can start the process of analyzing the data. On the other hand, the qualitative research design allows the researcher flexibility in terms of working in parallel to analyze and collecting data simultaneously. Thus, the internal validity of the research results increases (Thisted 2002, 3). Statistical methods are usually applied based on a model to simplify reality but that approach does not serve the purpose of this thesis. One could go further and say that when placed alongside qualitative evidence, quantitative evidence is both clear and powerful. However, the complexity of the OMLT mission and the contemporary environment in which United States and Coalition soldiers operate in Afghanistan to build the ANA call for a balanced and exploratory research method. Furthermore, the process of evaluating the OMLT program as an appropriate model requires terminology and a set of evaluation criteria that are qualitative in their nature.

Summing up, both qualitative and quantitative research methods provide valuable contribution to scientific knowledge. It is the nature of their contribution that is different.

They should be considered as complementary and not competing methods of generating scientific knowledge. The research methods should be chosen depending on which method is more likely to provide a more comprehensive, clearer, more complete and above all more descriptive of reality answer to the research questions stated.

The Qualitative Research Design

The research design for this thesis is qualitative. There are two reasons for this: The first reason is the advantage of flexibility in the research process. Second and more importantly, the qualitative research method follows the purpose of providing valid results in regards to evaluate if the OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National army. The goal of the author is to obtain trustworthy, authentic and credible evidence in order to provide the reader with confident results. Hence, this study requires a broad and exploratory approach to answer the research questions most effectively. One of the most common sources to evaluate information is to use existing information. The process of gaining valid information proves that there are unclassified printed materials available.

The author has chosen case study and document analysis as the two most relevant methods for collecting information for the thesis. A case study is an in depth examination of a particular case, a program, group of participants, single individual, site or location. Case studies rely on multiple sources of information and methods to provide as complete a picture as possible. Document analysis is the use of content analysis and other techniques to analyze and summarize printed material and existing information (Taylor-Powell 1996, 4). The primary sources are printed material from a wide range of credible sources. For the interest of the thesis relevant documentation from UN, NATO, United

States Congress, U.S. Army doctrine, training and operational experiences from the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and Norway, operational leadership experiences based on interviews from officers with OMLT experience on Corps, Brigade and Battalion level, research projects from U.S. Army War College and U.S. Command and General Staff College, as well as periodicals, journals and newspaper articles will be presented.

Several sources provide a more complete and credible evaluation than just one. Hence, the author has assessed several other courses of action to increase the validity of the thesis. An acceptable method is to conduct a comprehensive and comparative analysis of the United States and NATO countries efforts in cultivating the Croatian military from 1995 to 2000. In comparison to the contemporary effort of training the ANA, there were significant differences in the military assistance provided; although supported by NATO, there were no synchronized unity of effort by the Alliance. The military training was in reality a bilateral issue where several NATO countries provided training for officers and non-commissioned officers outside Croatia, language training and training in modern defense resource management techniques (NATO 2000). During the same time period, Croatia itself dedicated significant resources to professionalizing and modernizing its military. Furthermore, the aims of the various foreign training programs were to emphasize the apolitical role of the armed forces in a democratic country as well as to support Croatia on its path to becoming a NATO member. NATO voted at its Bucharest summit in April 2008 to invite Croatia to join NATO, but other member nations must sign the accession protocols before they become official. On October 26, 2008, President Bush signed the agreements endorsing Croatia as a NATO member and called on other

Balkan and former Soviet countries to join the Alliance (*Global Security* 2008). The reader should realize that the political motives of the Alliance are quite different than those applied to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the author will use evidence from the military training of the other nation`s military when suitable to shed light on the OMLT program in Afghanistan in order to increase the credibility of the thesis.

Evaluation Criteria

The fundamental role of NATO has since the foundation in 1949 has been to safeguard the freedom and security of its member countries by political and military means. NATO has never in its history provided a comprehensive military training program of a non-NATO member country on the scale of its efforts to develop to the security forces of Afghanistan. Hence, as briefly discussed above, empirical data is limited and hard to find. Because of this fact, and to the best knowledge of the author, no standard set of evaluation criteria has ever been applied to evaluate NATO`s ability to train foreign internal security forces. In this respect, this thesis “breaks new ground.” Moreover, an interesting question emerges: can NATO`s OMLT program form the basis for “best practices” in order to provide excellence in future training of foreign internal security forces? The author recognizes that the results of qualitative research generally have high internal and low external validity, meaning that the findings from the OMLT program are only valid in the Afghanistan case study. However, if future challenges call for a similar NATO mission, the OMLT program presents a way of assisting in the buildup of an army. According to future trends, stabilization operations will require military assistance to build up security forces on a scale that is not possible for Special Forces to handle alone. Consequently, this thesis seeks to merge and filter the relevant

information through the three principles of joint operations Restraint, Perseverance and Legitimacy as evaluation criteria in order to evaluate the OMLT program as the appropriate model for training the ANA.

Given the fact that the United States is the lead partnering nation for training the Afghan National Security Forces and that NATO is supporting this mission, the research questions reflect this relationship. Furthermore, the presentation of the research questions follows the same order in both this chapter and in chapter 4 where the analysis will be presented. Hence, the logical order is to start with the six secondary research questions and finish with the primary research question.

1. What are the core competencies for an OMLT mentor on corps and brigade level to master in order to be successful in the operational environment?
2. What are the core competencies required for an infantry Kandak (Battalion) level OMLT to be successful in the operational environment?
3. What are the advantages of the coalition composition of OMLTs versus U.S. Military Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) regarding developing the ANA?
4. What are the limitations of the coalition composition of OMLTs versus U.S. Military Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) regarding developing the ANA?
5. What are the national restrictions within NATO that have to be solved to improve the efficiency of the OMLT program?
6. What is the end state for an effective ANA when focus is on COIN operations on company levels or lower?

Is the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) program the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National Army?

Summary and Conclusion

This thesis is an exploratory study based on a qualitative research design. The purpose is to evaluate if the OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National Army. To implement an

effective research design which allows the author to analyze the data in parallel with data collection provides flexibility and increases the credibility of the thesis. The information collection as well as the number and variety of reliable sources are extensive. Hence, the author has applied a combination of case study and document analysis to validate the results of the study. The evaluation criteria to analyze the research questions are three principles of joint operations: Restraint, Perseverance and Legitimacy.

Chapter 4 takes the design methodology from this chapter and describes the analysis by using the literature from chapter 2 in order to present qualitative answers to the primary and secondary questions of this thesis. Chapter 5 discusses the conclusion and the recommendations.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

Our teaching qualities begin with understanding why we're here. We're here to help develop capability and capacity in the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police, and we must first and foremost respect the Afghan people, their culture, their government, and the Afghan National Security Forces that we're charged to build.

Major General Formica, Commanding General of CSTC-A

According to the NATO HQ in Brussels, the OMLT program is a key NATO-ISAF contribution towards the development of the ANA. The OMLT's main responsibility is to provide training and mentoring to the ANA forces. They also liaise between ANA and ISAF forces, coordinating the planning of operations and ensuring that ANA units receive necessary enabling support, including close air support, casualty evacuation support and medical evacuation. Depending on the ANA unit it is partnered with, the OMLTs are composed of 13-20 personnel from one or several countries. However, the number of personnel of a Kandak OMLT varies between the contributing nations due to the political and military risk each country is willing to accept regarding organic, built-in force protection. That is a consequence of the fact that brigade and Kandak OMLTs deploy with their ANA units across the country. As of December 2008, ISAF partners have provided only 42 OMLTs, out of an original requirement for 103, operating in all five regions of Afghanistan (Department of Defense 2009, 8). Furthermore, the NATO-ISAF led OMLT program works in complementary with the United States-led ETTs which perform exactly the same duties. Under United States leadership from CSTC-A, which exists as an organization to build, train, equip, and

mentor the ANSF, twenty three nations have contributed or have pledged to contribute to the OMLT program.

The opening quote of this chapter is Major General (MG) Formica's thought as to what is the most important teaching quality for mentors to the ANA (Formica 2009). MG Formica assumed his position at the CSTC-A in December 2008. As the foremost ranking commander of developing ANA in the theater, his command philosophy should have impact on every OMLT and ETT dedicated to this mission. MG Formica's ability to anticipate and take appropriate measures to deal with mission-related problems, the ability to make sure the training-organization learn and gain understanding and experience, as well as the ability to adapt to unfolding events, should within a military training- organization to a large extent determine the success or failure of the ANA training mission. The responsibility is tremendous and the CSTC-A Commander needs support from political level as well as throughout the military chain of the training command. The September 2008 decision of the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board (JCMB) to authorize expansion of the ANA from 80,000 to 122,000 force level (+ 12,000 training pool and transient personnel) will increase OMLT requirements, but the growth will be incremental and spread over the next five years (OMLT Fact Sheet 2008).

Chapter 4 forms the basis for why the NATO-ISAF led OMLT program in support of developing the ANA should become the main effort of NATO's security endeavor in Afghanistan. The United States should lead the way in providing additional trainers. As the surge in Iraq ends, the United States will have the forces needed for this. In setting the example, the United States under the new Administration may well inspire the NATO nations to see how adding trainers now could enable them to reduce their

forces later. Time is overdue because extra forces were needed yesterday, and building the ANSF is the fastest possible way of solving the security problem in Afghanistan. A former American ambassador to Afghanistan stated that “an enlarged army would strengthen Afghanistan’s central government, and thereby diminishing the power of the often corrupt local police departments. The ANA has a good officer corps respected by the Afghan people” (Neumann 2008). Twelve months have passed without significant progress in providing better national or local security for the Afghan population.

An Afghan face on military operations is more the exception than the rule. The results of President Karzai’s one-month deadline set in January 2009 for his demand that Afghan soldiers play a bigger role in military operations are yet to be seen. It is well understood by NATO countries by now that the first step toward building a national army in Afghanistan is broadening the base of the government, which will promote political stability, public trust, and security in the country. An Afghan state must build on Afghan culture and exploit the power of the local tribes and simultaneously provide enough central power and authority to hold the nation together. Such a state can be able to direct the re-creation of a “nationally oriented, ethnically balanced, morally disciplined, professionally skilled, and operationally coherent ANA” (Jalali 2002, 79). Unfortunately, it is a long way from situational awareness in the West and political talk, to a comprehensive approach that provides decisive action and security progress on the Afghan ground; Afghans will only believe progress has been made when they see with their own eyes that GIRoA provides enduring security. NATO countries talk the talk, but are reluctant to walk the walk. The different reasons for this “talk-walk” gap will be discussed later in this chapter.

This chapter discusses the most important reasons why the OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective ANA. The order of presenting the analysis is to start with the core competencies for mentors to master, the advantages and limitations of the OMLTs versus the ETTs, the national restrictions which must be lifted in order to improve the efficiency of the training effort, and finally what the end state for an effective ANA can be when focus is restricted to COIN operations on company level. For these reasons, the primary research question will be answered: Is the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team program the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective Afghan National Army?

The OMLT Training Process

In order to set the stage for the analysis, the OMLT training process is presented. The OMLT training model which NATO specifically has developed for Kandak (battalion) OMLTs consists of four phases: Phase 1 National training and preparation; Phase 2a NATO OMLT Kandak training; Phase 2b NATO OMLT above Kandak level training; Phase 3 Training in theatre and Phase 4 Relief in place training.

Phase 1- National Training and Preparation

Each nation is responsible for national training and preparation for their OMLTs during Phase 1. NATO has not yet developed a standardized training program for this phase, although the OMLT-handbook has helped facilitate the national training. Consequently, there are variations regarding the length, content and form, depending on which nation is concerned. However, NATO ISAF has submitted a recommendation to

each OMLT- providing nation to include the following subjects in their training: ISAF mission familiarization, weapons qualification, first aid, mine awareness, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) hazards and how to counter these threats, rules of engagement, law of war, NBC defense, driver training and handling of enemy personnel and equipment. As an example, the Norwegian Kandak OMLT which deployed to Afghanistan in January 2009, invested 9 months in collective training during Phase 1 (Forsvarsnett 2009). On the other hand, the length of the U.S. ETT training at Fort Riley, Kansas, which encompasses both phases 1 and 2 is only 72 days (Frank 2008).

Phase 2a- NATO OMLT Kandak Training

NATO offers a two-week long OMLT training course at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC), in Hohenfels Germany, to ensure standardization in Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP) like combat patrol, urban operations, cordon and search, platoon attack and base defense. The OMLTs will use these skills to mentor the ANA prior to deployment. This course is dedicated exclusively to the Kandak (Infantry, CS and CSS) level. The OMLTs are provided education and training across areas from culture to rules of engagement to advisor skills to calling in live close air support. OMLTs practice how to advise ANA soldiers, train them on mission essential tasks and then fight against the JMRC's OPFOR alongside their ANA counterparts (Joint Multinational Readiness Center 2008).

Phase 2b- NATO OMLT Above Kandak Level Training

The Joint Force Training Centre in Poland supports training for NATO and Partner forces to improve joint and combined tactical interoperability. The JFTC

conducts joint training for tactical level command posts and staffs in support of tactical level commanders. As a pre-deployment training centre, JFTC conducts Above-Kandak level trainings for OMLTs. The aim of OMLT training is to prepare the teams and staff assigned to ANA units/HQs to successfully execute their mission of coaching, teaching and mentoring by disseminating one-source knowledge of ANA doctrine, training principles, and the OMLT tactics, techniques and procedures (JFTC 2008). The main purpose of OMLTs is to ensure that ANA units develop in a standardized manner, which will allow them to carry out security tasks effectively. Additionally, standardized development is essential when ANA units conduct operations with ISAF forces. To this end, there is a need to standardize the OMLT training and operating procedures. The NATO OMLT above-Kandak level training commenced fall 2008. U.S. Army LTC Cardoni, who is an OMLT trainer at JFTC says, “Corps OMLTs need to be competent in campaign planning and center of gravity analysis.” He continues, “in fact, we are having a tough time figuring out exactly what practical training is for a Corps OMLT” (Cardoni 2008).

Phase 3- Training in Theatre

Training in theatre or the induction course is an ISAF responsibility and includes topics related to the operational situation on the ground. This is a three-day course and normally is conducted at HQ ISAF. This course is mandatory for all OMLTs. Due to different rotations of the OMLTs throughout the year, personnel from HQ ISAF have the capability to execute the induction course at each of the five Regional Commands.

Phase 4- Relief in Place Training

Relief-in-Place (RIP) training also called Right-Seat/Left-Seat training is conducted by OMLTs or other ETTs in the respective region. Emphasis on regional aspects is desired. Phase Four is planned to last 30 days. The purpose of this phase is to make the transition from one team to the next as smooth as possible. The outgoing team is responsible for setting their successors up for success. However, current operations and national priorities may narrow down the RIP period. For brigade and corps OMLT mentors, a normal handover is scheduled for one or two weeks. As the environment in Afghanistan becomes more complex, NATO seeks to further develop more robust measures to effectively educate OMLTs on counterinsurgency procedures, cultural sensitivities and the importance of ANA-led efforts necessary to consistently enhance a full range of enabling capabilities.

Assessment of the OMLT Training

Trainers and advisors must be capable of dealing with challenges inherent in working with poorly trained and equipped forces. To contend with these challenges, pre-deployment training focuses on the stresses and ambiguity associated with developing host-nation security forces (FM 3-07 2008, 6-15). NATO provides a sufficient training package for the OMLTs. The most important advantage of the training programs is that the Phase 2-4 programs have a standardized curriculum, thus ensuring the OMLTs the same point of departure. The programs are continuously revised and improved based on lessons learned in Afghanistan. Former OMLTs provide vital input to the instruction. The biggest disadvantage of the pre-deployment training is the absence of a standardized program for Phase 1, hence allowing each nation to conduct national training and

preparations in different ways and with different focus. Consequently, NATO should provide a mandatory training program based on the ISAF Validation Criteria, which would provide sufficient guidelines during the national training period.

The majority of nations which approve their OMLTs to conduct Phase 2a training in Germany are very satisfied. The NATO JMRC training course is highly appreciated and reckoned to be adequate for Kandak TTPs. A suggestion for further improvement is to put more emphasis on mentoring instead of doing all the mission essential tasks. It is too early to comment on the training program for OMLTs above Kandak level in Poland because this program has only been available since October 2008. The few countries that allow their Kandak OMLTs to bypass the JMRC training course are taking a calculated risk. For one thing, the OMLTs detract from doctrine standardization; they will not have access to the classified lessons learned and the OMLT's ability to reach full operational capability will be delayed. A second order effect is the decreased effectiveness in advising the ANA. A reasonable recommendation would be to make the Kandak OMLT training mandatory. It should be possible to work around financial or other national practical issues. The price for not being able to could be too high.

ETT Pre-deployment Training

In 2002, the United States initiated the ETT training program for mentors deploying to Afghanistan. In October 2006, the U.S. Army consolidated at Fort Riley, Kansas the pre-deployment training and preparation of U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force personnel for assignments as advisors to Afghan and Iraqi security forces. In October 2008, the U.S. Army announced that the program would shift to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana. The 72 day-training program focuses on the

three main areas: (1) *Combat Skills* (weapons qualification, marksmanship, battle drills, call for fire); (2) *Force Protection* (personnel recovery, combat lifesaver, biometrics, unexploded ordnance); and (3) *Technical and Tactical Training* (communications training, Blue Force Tracker, detainee operations, urban operations).

Additionally, the training program also focuses on *culture* (history of Islam and history of Afghanistan), *language* (44 - Hours of instruction), *advisor skills* (role of advisor, use of interpreter, how to gain influence), and *counterinsurgency* (basic- and advanced). The limited time period aims to balance the professional skills listed above and the skills required for situational awareness. The Operations Officer (G3) in 1st Infantry Division said; "50 percent Army training, 35 percent education, 15 percent teambuilding equals 100 percent trained and ready teams" (Patrick 2008). Some officials in battle space-owning units in Afghanistan have argued that the quality of ETTs varies and that "the ETTs are better suited to planning than execution" (CRS 2008, 44). One reason for some reported variation in the quality of U.S. advisors may be that they are selected on an individual basis and come from a wide variety of backgrounds that may or may not include extensive operational experience. The annual throughput of mentors at Fort Riley was about 5000 mentors in 2008, and the main effort was to provide sufficient number of forces to Iraq and accept risk in Afghanistan. The United States training and advisory effort has been undermanned since the Green Berets (U.S. Army Special Forces) began training the ANA in May 2002. The lack of U.S. ETTs in Afghanistan is therefore a consequence of priorities of the United States. Furthermore, the NATO countries have failed to fill the advisory-gap despite the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan.

OMLT Validation

The OMLTs are validated to guarantee that the OMLTs are able to support the ANA in conducting the full spectrum of independent operations in accordance with the NATO ISAF mandate. COM ISAF is responsible for the OMLT validation and the main criteria for validation are topics related to OMLT personnel strength, tour length, cross-boundary deployability from the AO of one NATO ISAF Regional Command to another, communications, force protection and firepower. The consequence of not being validated, or losing validation, is for the OMLT to be replaced by an OMLT from another nation or an U.S. ETT.

OMLT End State

The desired OMLT end state is achieved when the ANA is capable of conducting primary operational missions (GAO 2008, 17). Depending on the situation, ANA units may require specific assistance from the Coalition or the international community after Capability Milestone (CM) 1 is achieved. The OMLTs will continue to support the ANA for six consecutive months before redeploying.

Requirement for ANA Training Teams

NATO ISAF supports ANA training and mentoring in three main areas: generating and deploying OMLTs; filling CSTC-A training billets; and providing functional area mentoring, mobile niche training, schools, and courses. In November 2008, CSTC-A requested 2,300 additional police advisors and 60 additional ANA advisory teams to field the current ANA organization (Cone 2008). Hence by extrapolation, the requirement is 1,200 ANA mentors. For all practical purposes, those

ANA advisory teams could come either from the United States military or from other NATO countries, although NATO, despite repeated requests, has been reluctant to provide ANA advisory teams in sufficient numbers, or to provide embedded police trainers. The United States is not fulfilling its promises either; only 46 per cent of the required ETTs were fielded by October 2008. Moreover, the ETTs require a total of 2,391 personnel; however, only 1,062 were assigned (CSIS 2008, 21). A shortage of training and mentoring personnel is a challenge to the continued development of the ANA, particularly in the context of a larger force. The current number of deployed and pledged OMLTs still falls short of the 103 total OMLTs required. This shortfall will increase as a result of the ANA expansion.

Members of the international community assisting in this effort have fielded 86 per cent of the OMLTs. ISAF partners have fielded 42 OMLTs, and pledged a further 15 (Department of Defense 2009, 29). However, the number of OMLTs in the field is smaller than the number of ETTs. One-third of personnel in the field assisting ANA unit development are OMLTs, while two-thirds are ETTs (CSIS 2008, 21). On January 27, 2009, Secretary Gates testified before the Senate Armed Forces Committee and blamed ISAF for the “persistent shortfalls for training teams” (Gates 2009, 2). In fact, the United States is under-manning its ETTs far more than ISAF is under-manning the OMLTs. In essence, this limits the effectiveness of the United States in Afghanistan, much like the European caveats that the Americans are so quick to complain about.

In November 2008, CSTC-A reported the ANA teams were 78 per cent staffed. These figures reflect the re-balancing from earlier in the year, when ANA teams were resourced at 93 per cent but ANP teams were only resourced at 12 per cent (CRS 2009,

45). More importantly, they also reflect some breaking down of available advisory teams into smaller pieces, in order to extend coverage to more Afghan units. By doing this, the ETTs operating in the field will be exposed to an increased threat due to less organic force protection, the quality of the advisory mission will decrease and the mentoring mission will take longer. Again, the quality of the mentors should rather loom forth in order to balance the quantitative approach. Additionally, the requirement for ANA mentors is not static. As the ANA units improve their capabilities, the ETTs and OMLTs should be assigned to new ANA Kandaks as the ANA continues to grow. However, the out-year prediction of ISAF OMLT numbers assumes a constant yearly increase of 11 OMLTs (Department of Defense 2009, 38). The next section addresses the quality of mentors assigned to the ANA.

Core Competencies for OMLT Mentors on Corps and Brigade Level

Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.

T.E. Lawrence, "Twenty-Seven Articles," 1917

The first research question is: what core competencies should an OMLT mentor on corps and brigade level master to be successful in the operational environment? The ambition of the author is to illuminate the core competencies for OMLT mentors, first generally and secondly for OMLT mentors on corps and brigade level in particular. The purpose is to provide valid guidance for future military mentors deploying to Afghanistan. However, these recommendations are not applicable unchanged in any particular situation. Mentoring is an art, not a science, with a lot of exceptions and very

few rules. However, if applied carefully, the mentor and counterpart should have a good start for “their common march towards the mountain they must climb together.” The analysis will show that the character of the OMLT mentor and his cultural understanding are relatively more important than professional technical and tactical skills, as the mentor serves on higher ANA levels.

The opening quote of this section is frequently cited, however, the last sentence above offers at least the same weight of wisdom as the first. Based on personal experience as an OMLT mentor in Afghanistan, the author is the first to acknowledge this. Also, we know that the ANA do their best when they feel ownership of a course of action. Patience is a true virtue, and one of the most important ones according to many mentors interviewed after their deployment as ETT or OMLT mentors (Eyre 2007, 2). According to *Afghanistan Watch*, “The most serious threat to the fledgling Afghan state may be lurking in an unexpected place; not in the strife-ridden streets of Kandahar or the flourishing poppy fields of the countryside, but in the unfulfilled aspirations of average Afghan citizens” (*Afghanistan Watch* 2007). It is easy to understand the lack of public confidence. After billions of dollars in aid money and the deployment of tens of thousands of foreign troops, Afghanistan remains a grindingly poor nation with a weak central government that cannot provide its people with basic services, jobs or security (Mercy Corps 2007).

The “expectations- gap” of the Afghan public can be filled by implementing a credible and effective communications strategy to better guide and manage public expectations. However, the Afghan people believe in what they see, not what they are told. Too many broken promises over decades have caused that situation. On the other

side, there is an “expectations- gap” in the West also, probably due to lack of situational understanding of what is possible to achieve within a realistic timeframe. The point is that it is crucial to understand for the contributing nations in the West and their military mentors as well, who strive to improve Afghan security, locally as well as nationally, that building a nation literally from the bottom, requires a generation.

Patience

Patience is a function of individual situational understanding of the operating environment. More than two millennia ago, Sun Tzu, the Chinese military philosopher, claimed patience to be one of the strategic principles of revolutionary warfare. Moreover, the originally French proverb from 1190, “Rome was not built in one day,” applies to Afghanistan to the greatest extent. According to the Afghan calendar, this is year 1388 (2009-10) thus literally illustrating the gap of centuries of development between Afghanistan and the NATO and EU countries. The OMLT mentor, who wants to perform well and make lasting results during a deployment period of months, should re-think what is possible realistically and discuss the future goals with his predecessor. One important piece of advice would be to place one`s own personal ambitions aside, and the ANA soldier and ANA mission first, and practice the U.S. Army values of selfless service and respect.

Situational Understanding

An in-depth understanding of the operational environment—including the available friendly host-nation forces, the opposing threats, and civil considerations—is critical to planning and conducting effective security force assistance operations (FM 3-

07 2008, 6-15). Medical scholars know that the problem has always been to get the right analyses before prescribing the cures. Analysis demands situational understanding and not simply awareness. Situational understanding encompasses as a minimum; the understanding of language (or languages), culture and values as well as the ANA organization and most importantly, the ANA counterpart as a person. In Afghan culture, age and rank are important factors to take in consideration. Particularly evident at corps and brigade level, some mentors are considered by their ANA counterpart as too young to advise experienced and mature ANA officers. Several examples exist: such as a young NCO mentoring an ANA LTC in the G2 area or a private (ETT) mentoring a LTC. These differences in age and rank have led to difficulty in OMLT and ETT members being fully accepted or considered credible by the ANA.

Situational understanding of the regional challenges as well as for those of Afghanistan is a core competence for OMLT mentors on corps and brigade level. Clausewitz has, through *Vom Kriege*, taught officers for almost 200 years that the military force is an instrument to achieve political goals. Furthermore, current U.S. Army doctrine dictates that “the commander`s intent must be clearly understood two echelons down” (FM 3-0 2008, 5-10). For these reasons and as an example, the OMLT brigade mentor must therefore have the ability to understand the intent of the Afghan Minister of Defense due to how the ANA is organized, as well as understand the commander`s intent through the NATO ISAF chain of command. For the OMLT corps mentor, it is significant as a minimum to have situational awareness of, in order of importance: (1) the diversity of ethnic groups and the establishment of the arbitrary Durand Line of 1893 that split the Pashtu population and how that has effected Afghanistan, (2) the refugee

problem; there are three million refugees outside of Afghanistan to be repatriated during 2009, (3) the concern of the local people for their lack of security and the underlying causes for the lack of security in the region, (4) the inherent friction between the centralized GIROA and the decentralized tribal culture, and (5) the economic situation based on production and trafficking of poppy for the development of narcotics, causing effects like those of a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) to the populations in the West. The development of ANA does not take place in a vacuum and OMLT mentors with a comprehensive understanding of the operational environment will have better conditions for teaching, coaching and mentoring the ANA.

Building Rapport

Building rapport is crucial for the success of the advisor. A mentor will never have a second chance to give a positive first impression. The greater the mentor's professional competence and his ability to establish rapport with the ANA counterpart, the more likely it is that the ANA officer will accept and act on the mentor's advice. According to Afghan culture, personal relationships built on trust must be established before a professional relationship can bear fruit. Therefore, a humble attitude based on respect is highly recommendable. Furthermore, the mentor should have a clear understanding how to advise and mentor an Afghan.

Cultural understanding and the professional skill set must be in balance. It is prerequisite for an OMLT mentor to understand his own culture and values before trying to understand the Afghan culture. The following example shows clearly one difference between the American and the Afghan culture: "American organizations are efficient because of their impersonality and fast pace." The statement is a characterization of the

American culture, made by the American author Garry Althen who is the author of *American Ways: a Guide for Foreigners in the United States* (Althen 2003, 286). The culture of Afghanistan, in which *Pashtunwali* (code of honor) has a strong influence, is based on personal respect and honor. Keeping face is extremely important for the Afghan. The mentor will sometimes not receive a clear answer because of this requirement. The Afghan sense of honor must not be violated because doing so will harm future mentoring efforts.

Time and Military Planning

Time is not important from an Afghan perspective, and ANA has traditionally been reluctant to conduct long term planning. The advisor is often faced with the dilemma of how to reconcile the hard and fast dictates of military operations with a culture that does not view timelines and tactical continuing actions with the same degree of urgency (Milburn & Lombard 2006). While serving as a corps OMLT mentor for future operations, the author found personal experience of this difficult to accept. Deputy ANA Corp Commander, Brigadier General Gul Aqa Naibi, responded with a new question when the author asked for an explanation to better understand this issue. The Brigadier General asked, “Have you ever tried to balance two watermelons in one hand?” The significance of the question from the General’s point of view was that “it is too hard and painful to remember the Afghan military history and simultaneously struggle with the overwhelming and numerous challenges of ANA today. How can we possibly be able to worry about tomorrow? Our shoulders are not strong enough” (Naibi, 2007). Thus, Afghans tend to be fatalistic; surrendering their will to Allah. The OMLTs must respect this frustrating aspect and not translate fatalism with the lack of diligence. This also

explains how the ANA can continue to function despite daily miserable conditions. Failing to plan does not necessary mean laziness. It just means that the ANA prefer to “react to contact.” In the opinion of the author, not many Western armies have the same capability to deploy forces on such short notice. ANA is ready within minutes, not days, weeks or months. However, the ANA has come a long way regarding improving the ability to manage current- and long term planning, mainly because of the effective mentoring and support of NATO ISAF and their mentors, in order to improve the ability to jointly solve military problems in a COIN environment. Nevertheless, long term planning is not yet inherent in the Afghan military culture.

The Approach of the Mentor

Acknowledging different cultural and military upbringing are also important. There are three phases in mentoring. During phase one, the mentor should assume the lead and provide good examples which allow the ANA counterpart a baseline from which progress can start. The second phase is a joint phase where teamwork progresses. The third and final is when the ANA can lead their own army independently and the Coalition forces strictly play a supporting role, in planning as well as in execution of operations. The mentor should balance the involvement based on which phase the ANA counterpart is in. The key point is that it is not possible to take one or two aspects of a culture and transplant them somewhere else. They will not fit. Hence, the Afghan way is the best way for Afghans in a long term perspective. Therefore, the mentor must encourage the ANA to take ownership, always allow them to decide and rather explain disadvantages and advantages of different courses of action. Accept frustration and never lose patience. A mentor, who makes the effort to understand the Afghan, will see how the various aspects

of the Afghan culture fit together. The patterns that underlie people`s behavior will become more visible, and the mentor will become increasingly able to predict what other people will do. Hence, the mentor can better plan, anticipate future events and save lives.

Leadership and Language

The nuances of language and dialect must be addressed, either through formal training or dedicated interpreters. If using interpreters, they must be capable of performing all of the activities conducted by embedded trainers and advisors (FM 3-07 2008, 6-15). OMLT mentors are leaders, and leadership is all about influencing people. The ability to influence is dependent on the ability to communicate. Without language training, communication is impaired. For non-native English speaking OMLTs, the language training is even more challenging. In order to partner with an ANA unit and liaise with NATO forces, English and Dari/Pashto knowledge is critical. Language is also the single most important factor in breaking down cultural barriers. The OMLT job description should dictate the language requirements. Lacking language skills, OMLTs cannot hear and fully understand what is going on around them. OMLTs without desired language capabilities will depend heavily on interpreters. “Lost in translation” is at best annoying, at worst fatal. People are killed in the worst case scenario. Moreover, the interpreters work for the OMLTs, not ANA. Quite a few Afghan interpreters working for NATO ISAF fear for their lives and claim they do not dare to tell who their employer is. However, the Afghan tribal cultures are masterminds in networking and know how to gain information in their own country. The interpreters will remain in Afghanistan after NATO ISAF have redeployed. Therefore, interpreters are, even if they have their security clearances, a military security risk which the OMLTs always must consider.

ANA Doctrine

The Combined Training Advisory Group (CTAG) is a subordinate command to CSTC-A. CTAG trains, advises, coaches, and mentors the ANA Training Command to establish a doctrine and training system capable of sustaining the ANA. CTAG includes personnel from many different countries and supervises the mentoring and training efforts of all allied nations in Kabul (Department of Defense 2009, 37). Joint Publication 1-02 defines doctrine as the “Fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application” (JP 1-02 2008, 171). Corps and brigade OMLTs should be proficient in the military decision making process (MDMP), and should understand the ANA doctrine and how it is being developed. The ANA MDMP is founded on the U.S. Army MDMP; translated word by word from English to Dari as well as taught locally to the ANA by retired U.S. Officers, working for MPRI. MPRI is a contractor, which according to their website, “serves the national security needs of the US government, selected foreign governments, international organizations and the private sector with programs of the highest standards and methodologies of proven effectiveness” (MPRI 2009).

However, no OMLT mentor should blindly believe that the ANA wants to be a clone of the U.S. Army. One can neither expect that Afghanistan or the ANA will organize itself according the same lines, nor in accordance with the same standards of those of ISAF countries. Hence, ANA needs in a medium and long term perspective to become more combat effective in its own way. The first step is therefore to “Afghanize” the ANA doctrine development program, and slowly move away from the current ANA

doctrine, which is what the United States want the ANA to become in the future. Due to illiteracy and the fact that ANA doctrine is not applicable to the ANA way of conducting operations, the “Americanized” ANA doctrine is largely ignored and underutilized. Writing ANA doctrine and training manuals must involve ANA officers and should reflect what ANA currently is capable of, in order to make ANA able to improve future doctrines. The crawl, walk, run approach allowing ANA judgment to shape the process is crucial.

NATO doctrine and U.S. Army doctrine as well as the U.S. Army MDMP and the NATO Guidelines for Operational Planning (GOP), which were developed for conventional operations, are in accordance. However, neither NATO nor ANA has an updated doctrine applicable for COIN operations. During the last three years, the U.S. Army has updated the most important manuals to the COE: In October 2006, the U.S. Army filled a 20 year doctrinal gap and published the FM 6-22 *Leadership* manual and 2 months later; FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*. FM 3-0 *Operations* was published in February 2008, and FM 3-07 *Stability Operations* in October 2008. Finally, when FM 7-0 *Training for Full Spectrum Operations* was released in December 2008, it was the first time U.S. Army operations and training manuals were completely consistent. The majority of the U.S. Army- and NATO officers are not doctrinally up to speed. The important issue in this context is that time is required to change the mindset of the majority of officers, i.e., American, Afghan or any ISAF officers. For OMLT mentors, is important to be able to balance the mindset of a diplomat with the warrior`s. It is highly desirable for mentors to possess that capability *before* deployment. Thus; train as you intend to fight. Since one can’t train on all tasks, one must train on the most important

tasks. The military was basically designed for literally the opposite of Nation building; to destroy enemy organizations and kill enemy soldiers, or in other words, to impose its own nation`s will on the enemy.

Core Competencies for OMLT Mentors on the Infantry Kandak Level

The infantry Kandak (battalion equivalent) is the cornerstone and most important unit in the ANA. As stated previously, the character of the OMLT mentor and his cultural understanding is relatively more important than professional technical and tactical skills, as the mentor serves on higher ANA levels. On Kandak level and below, the art of soldiering is still for all practical purposes based on science. To be clear up front, the same competencies analyzed above also apply for OMLTs on Kandak level. However, there are more competencies to master. The second research question is: what are the core competencies for an infantry Kandak level OMLT to be successful in the operational environment? I classify these core competencies as command and control, mandates, ANA modus operandi and OMLT employment, and professional credibility.

Command and Control

Trainers and advisors provide a crucial link between host-nation forces and the forces, agencies, organizations, and institutions supporting the broader stability effort (FM 3-07 2008, 6-15). Moreover, the FM 3-07 *Stability Operations* emphasizes that trainers and advisors at all levels should be linked through a collaborative network that facilitates information sharing across the security sector. This enables them to monitor the actions, challenges, and decisions among the host-nation forces under development while providing a means to alert one another should issues arise (FM 3-07 2008, 6-15).

The importance of understanding the command and control (C2) relationships can never be underestimated. The OMLTs are unfortunately suffering from unclear C2 relationships due to various stakeholders on the ground. The conglomerate of different ROEs does not make the situation better. The complexity of the C2 arrangements affects the efficiency of the OMLTs. The core problem is that the OMLTs are under dual control: CSTC-A exercises training control of all OMLTs/ETTs which allows TF PHOENIX authority to give specified direction and guidance to the OMLTs/ETTs. On the other hand, the OMLTs are OPCON to COMISAF and TACOM to the RC in their respective area of operations. So while ISAF and the RCs focus on operations, CSTC-A and TF PHOENIX focus on ANA training. Moreover, and to risk complicating the relationship even further: The OMLTs and the ETTs will be TACON to the NATO partner unit during ANA Units` green phase. Partnering units are Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), Quick Reaction Forces (QRFs) and Special Operation Forces (SOF). ETTs, OMLTs, and U.S. Special Forces Units assess ANA units, helping the units identify strengths, shortfalls, and opportunities for improvement. The Kandak OMLTs need to understand the fundamentals of TACOM, TACON, OPCON, and TRGCON. Furthermore, the OMLTs must be able to exercise flexibility and find workable solutions amongst the different stakeholders. The OMLT mission requires excellent coordination and synchronization. No single command structure meets the needs of every multinational command but one absolute remains constant: political considerations will heavily influence the ultimate shape of the command structure. These considerations will be discussed when addressing national caveats.

Mandates

The fact is that we are at war in Afghanistan. It's not peacekeeping. It's not stability operations. It's not humanitarian assistance. It's war.

General McKiernan, ISAF Commander

There are two different mandates the OMLTs must understand. The NATO ISAF mandate focuses mainly on reconstruction, while the OEF mandate focuses on counter-terrorism operations. ISAF forces do not have a mandate to perform any police training but both OEF and ISAF forces train and mentor the ANA. The majority of countries providing OMLTs have signed up for the ISAF mandate, and have agreed to contribute troops on the premise that ISAF's focus would be post-conflict stability operations. That premise may have been valid at the time of ISAF's formation, but in 2009, the security climate has changed and an organized, capable insurgency has emerged. "ISAF conducts operations in partnership with GIRoA and in coordination with OEF, UNAMA, and the international community in order to assist GIRoA to defeat the insurgency, establish a secure environment, extend viable governance, and promote development throughout Afghanistan" (CRS 2009, 11). Importantly, this diversity of mandates soon becomes a political issue when a Kandak OMLT which operates under the ISAF mandate has to conduct a cross boundary-movement with the partnering ANA unit, where the latter conduct joint operation with U.S. Special Forces operating under the OEF mandate. Finally, the conflicting roles and status of ISAF and OEF are not readily apparent to ANA at Kandak level. Consequently, if an OMLT delivers less capability than a previous ETT or an OMLT from another nation, this reflects on the Coalition, and impacts directly on the credibility of the individual OMLT personnel.

ANA Modus Operandi and OMLT Employment

The Kandak OMLTs must stress the importance to ANA of the importance of balancing training and operations. While current operations are considered more urgent by most ISAF commanders, the training effort has a more important long term effect on ANA. The OMLTs play a key role coordinating and synchronizing training and operations with the ANA, the RC and CSTC-A. When the ANA soldiers have completed their training at Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC), they are assigned to Kandaks for collective training. The ANA Annual Training Guidance, published by the Afghan MoD, and refined throughout the ANA chain of command, explains the Red-Yellow-Green (RYG) Training Cycle. The RYG training cycle takes nine months. The OMLT involvement in the ANA training starts once soldiers report for duty at the Kandak. The Red phase is an administrative period of one month focused on garrison tasks and individual training. The Yellow phase is dedicated two months' collective training and combat preparation. The Green phase is a six-month long operational phase.

During the operational phase, the Kandak conducts joint operations and joint training with a partnering unit, while the OMLT mentors and plays a facilitating role. However, the operational tempo is causing a negative effect on ANA, due to the fact that the operational phase more often than not is extended to nine months or longer. Hence, this wears out the ANA and makes it challenging for those OMLTs which rotate on a six month basis. The extended operational phase impacts ANA training negatively because it delays the ANA training standard.

OMLT logistics is a national responsibility. Due to a lack of logistic implementation on the ground, and issues related to what the “lead Nation” responsibility

encompasses, some OMLTs have difficulties deploying with the ANA Kandak, particularly on cross-boundary operations. Within NATO, logistics is a national responsibility. Although U.S. Forces to some extent are able to support an OMLT in their AO, there are communication issues and issues associated with different rules of engagement, thus limiting the OMLTs ability to “plug and play” with other ISAF nations, as well as logistical issues related to the other ISAF nations ability to logistically sustain the OMLT operating in the field for weeks.

Professional Credibility

The Kandak OMLT center of gravity is its personal and professional credibility. The Kandak OMLTs must be willing to share the same risk and to fight shoulder to shoulder to the ANA counterpart. First, the best place to be in combat is beside the mentored ANA counterpart. From that position only can the OMLT be a combat enabler and call for fire support, CAS or MEDEVAC. The second critical OMLT requirement is technical and tactical proficiency. The ANA expect the OMLT to be experts on small unit tactics, and to master the ANA unit's METL. Furthermore, the degree to which the OMLT is embedded with the ANA, will dictate the trust relationship. National caveats will be discussed later in this section. At this point, it might be worthwhile to mention the reason why the non-U.S. advisor teams are named differently than ETTs: The main reason was the lack of political acceptance amongst NATO countries for the OMLTs to be *embedded* with the ANA across Afghanistan. This predisposition will prevent OMLTs from partnering with ANA units to the extent the author advocates and further highlights the cultural differences within ISAF.

OMLT Advantages

The third research question is: What are the advantages of the coalition composition of OMLTs versus ETTs regarding developing the ANA? The following section expands on the importance of deploying robust advisory teams and discusses the OMLT program as a change agent for NATO's organizational improvement on the tactical level.

OMLTs Are More Robust Than the ETTs

While each nation has its own interests, all nations bring value to the operation. Each national force has unique capabilities, and each usually contributes to the operation's legitimacy in terms of international or local acceptability (FM 3-0 2008, 1-58 - 1-67). As discussed previously, the OMLTs and the ETTs are in theory very similar in their abilities. However, the single greatest advantage of the OMLTs is that the OMLTs are typically better manned than the ETTs. The OMLTs usually come to Afghanistan fully manned with a sizable force protection package. This potentially allows the OMLT to focus on more areas simultaneously than an ETT can (Oliver 2008). Second, the OMLTs are able to provide better liaison with ISAF partnered forces when the OMLT is from the same nation as the partnered unit. The French Kandak OMLT, operating in Uruzgan Province located in the southern part of Afghanistan, consists of 60 members from the French Marine Corps and the French Foreign Legion. France has in total deployed 1000 soldiers to Afghanistan, whose mission is to focus simultaneously on "training the Afghan soldiers to be self-sufficient in operations and to help improve the security of this region," Lt. Col. Eric Berthiaux, French OMLT commanding officer says.

He continues that “it is a very interesting mission and it is a good challenge for us” (ISAF 2008).

The UK has significantly increased its troop commitment in Afghanistan to 8100. The extra 300 forces recently deployed are mainly conducting a “train the trainer” program for the ANA in Helmand province (CRS 2008, 31). In January 2009, the ANA's 3-205 Brigade for the first time commanded a complex multi-national brigade-level operation. With their robust British OMLT from 1 Rifles they brought in Canadian and Danish ground forces, and a whole array of multi-national aircraft and artillery in order to clear an area from the Taliban and give the local nationals a chance to return to their homes to a normal and peaceful living. In total over 700 troops and more than 100 vehicles were deployed for over seven days. UK Defence Minister Kevan Jones says: “The work of the British mentors, the 1st Battalion the Rifles, has been central to this success, passing on the skills and experience of the British Army and setting the foundations for a safe and secure Afghanistan” (*Defence News* 2009). Major Ben Tomkins, 1 Rifles, Chief of Staff OMLT and British Ground Commander operation, says Operation ATTAL has been hugely significant in the development of the ANA's 3-205 Brigade (*Defence News* 2009).

Finally, the United States should take heed of the fact that one of the key lines of operation defined by ISAF for Afghanistan is to enhance governance partly by building partner capacity in the ANA and ANP. Hence, the U.S. Army should stop filling out most of its ETTs with individual augmentees and service members from the National Guard, some of whom receive only days of preparatory advisory training. This course of action is the equivalent of a United States caveat that hampers the ANSF training effort.

The OMLTs Are Developing NATO

NATO has come a long way in 60 years and has proved itself to be capable of adapting to an ever changing security background. In 2009, NATO is still politically and militarily relevant. Each partner in multinational operations possesses a unique cultural identity. Hence, the NATO ISAF OMLT program is both connecting people in Afghanistan and bringing the Armed Forces of NATO together. Current operations are the glue that maintain NATO's proficiency on operational and tactical level. The OMLTs are tools for NATO to reinforce and promote interoperability within the Alliance as well as a key contribution to the security assistance mission. Furthermore, the OMLTs deliver military effect to Afghanistan as well as positively influencing the Afghan military culture. While assisting in developing ANA capacity and capability, the OMLTs are also indirectly "importing democratic values" from the West to the Afghan society; these democratic values are important for Afghanistan to adapt in their culture in order to provide good governance in their effort of building a nation state.

Knowledge of partners within NATO is crucial for also being relevant in the future. NATO commanders and their staffs should have an understanding of each member of the multinational force. Much time and effort is expended in learning about the various adversaries in Afghanistan and in neighboring countries; a similar effort is required to understand the doctrine, capabilities, strategic goals, culture, religion, customs, history, and values of each partner. Not surprisingly to personnel with OMLT experience; effective partnerships take time and attention to develop. Therefore, "diligent pursuit of a trusting, mutually beneficial relationship with multinational partners requires untiring, even-handed patience. This is easier to accomplish within alliances but is

equally necessary regarding prospective coalition partners” (JP 3-16 2007, x). The benefit to NATO and to each of the countries contributing with OMLTs is to gain experience in Full Spectrum Operations. The experience of the OMLTs will furthermore continue to drive and improve military development within NATO and function as a foundation for organizational change, especially on tactical levels in each country.

OMLT Disadvantages

FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, dictates that “Continuity of personnel is essential to maintaining relationships on which the success of force development depends. Tour lengths for advisors must be long enough to develop these relationships and staggered enough to maintain continuity and expertise with the developing host-nation force. Continuity fosters understanding, which is essential to development.”
(FM 3-07 2008, 6-15)

Research question number four is: What are the limitations of the coalition composition of OMLTs versus ETTs regarding developing the ANA? As the quote above indicates, the duration of the advisory team deployment in Afghanistan has impact on the mission and will open up the discussion of the OMLT limitations. Moreover, this paragraph encompasses OMLT interoperability and NATO’s ability to learn from experience, or the lack thereof.

Deployment Duration

During the 1980s, the Soviets failed to train the indigenous Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) military forces mainly because of cultural reluctance. The Russian General Staff identified an advisor’s lack of time in the country as a major factor in the failure to train DRA forces. Russian officers usually served for two years as an advisor, and the job was considered a hardship assignment. The Russian advisors suffered from

poor living conditions, language and cultural barriers and they constantly feared for their lives (Pomper 2008, 312). The OMLTs operating in the country today share the majority of the same characteristics in today's COE. According to the OMLT minimum military requirements, the OMLT rotation length should be at least six months, for reasons mentioned above. LTC Oliver, an OMLT trainer at JMRC says that "it is not the organization but the duration of deployment that makes a difference" (Oliver 2008). Based on several comments from OMLT trainers in Germany and Poland, the most significant point is the difference in the ANA training cycle (9 months) and the OMLT deployment cycle (Cardoni 2008). Furthermore, an ETT remains in Afghanistan for about a year versus 4-9 months for OMLTs.

From various OMLT trainers' points of view, a more effective technique would be to have an advisor team paired up with the same ANA unit for a longer period rather than a short period. This fosters better team building between the advisor team and the ANA, which leads to mutual trust and more continuity in training. Both of these two elements are critical in developing ANA. However, based on informal conversations with U.S, Dutch and German officers after OMLT deployments as well as the author's own experience, balancing the rotation length should take into account other factors such as taking care of soldiers or political risk. 73 per cent of the Russians became casualties of one kind or another after being deployed to Afghanistan in the 1980s. Most NATO countries do not want to follow the bear into the same woods, and suffer the same experiences of the Russians. The risk for OMLT soldiers being killed or injured seems to be assessed by European politicians as too high if the OMLTs are deployed for more than 9 months.

OMLTs Ability to Plug and Play

Several factors limit the ability of OMLTs to conduct nation-wide and full spectrum operations. First, the majority of the OMLTs only have English as their second or third language. Consequently, communication and coordination can easily become an issue. Limited English proficiency also increases the difficulty of finding effective translators and interpreters. Moreover, it makes it difficult to liaise with other coalition partners. Second, multinational OMLTs must work through the differences between the various national caveats. Multinational Kandak OMLTs are according to the requirement abandoned; however, there are various international OMLT constellations on brigade and corps level. It makes it hard when multinational OMLTs must come to consensus regarding training coordination and ANA assessment. The lead nation concept does not work perfectly Afghan wide. Third, most OMLTs are not very familiar with the ANA doctrine. The ANA has as explained previously, adopted a variation of U.S. doctrine. Although many NATO countries are familiar with the overarching doctrine, they have little to no exposure to the details. These factors make the task of training the ANA difficult. Nations that don't do Phase II training may be applying different training standards and putting the OMLT, the ANA and the mission at risk. Consequently, differing doctrine may be taught to the ANA throughout the five RCs. Last but not least, unwritten caveats such as that an OMLT cannot take part in combat operations or it cannot deploy with the Kandak to a different RC can cause international friction. The caveats will be discussed in the next section.

OMLTs Ability to Learn from Experience

There is room for improvement regarding NATO's ability to learn from experience. OMLT trainers struggle with trying to get their hands on Lessons Learned (LL) or Lessons Identified (LI) from all the nations that deploy. NATO ISAF Directorate for Afghan National Army Training and Equipment Support (DATES) even has a tough time getting it from the Nations when they redeploy (Cardoni 2008). There is no central database from which to draw from in order to address real operational issues that would call for a revision of training. In many cases, many LI/LL remains with each country. The problems are at NATO, not with the OMLT concept itself. In this particular case, NATO has not reacted fast enough to changing situations, especially considering a COIN fight where the operational focus can change quickly. LTC Cardoni says; "most OMLTs don't even have access to a NATO/Mission Secret system until they deploy, which eliminates beginning any kind of "virtual/network" right seat ride" (Cardoni 2008). It still remains a mystery to the author why none of the thirteen different Centers of Excellence in NATO are not addressing COIN operations in 2009. That is not acceptable, especially when considering that COIN and SO most likely will dominate the operational environment for at least the next decade.

National Restrictions within NATO

No one starts a war, or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so, without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it.

Clausewitz's definition of Purpose of War, Book 8, Chapter 2

General John Craddock, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), said in late October 2008 that there were "70 national caveats which prevent troops from

countries such as Germany, Spain, Italy and France from performing certain operational missions without first receiving authorization from their governments” (*London Times* 2008). General Craddock, who is an American, continued saying that this “wavering political will impedes operational progress and brings into question the relevance of the alliance in the 21st century.” Despite the fact that the General is addressing NATO as a whole and not the OMLTs in particular, the lack of political will to allow every OMLT to play by the rules of the military requirements is to a degree hampering the ANA training mission as well. Therefore, research question number five is: What are the national restrictions within NATO that have to be solved to improve the efficiency of the OMLT program?

Political Restraints on Cross Boundary Movements

Many ISAF troop-contributing countries maintain caveats on their forces in the field. The shortfalls and caveats hinder operational flexibility. The United States government has consistently emphasized the importance of giving commanders in the field the maximum possible flexibility to ensure that they can accomplish their mission in the fastest possible timeframe, while minimizing risk and loss of life. More than 50 per cent of the Allies in ISAF have some form of caveats on the geographical and/or functional deployment of their forces. Some Allies have no written caveats on their forces, but operate with de facto restrictions that can be even more severe than caveats. Caveats tend to be informed by domestic political constraints. For example, a government may consider that only by limiting its troops’ activities, and hedging against taking casualties, can it guard against strong popular domestic opposition to its troop contribution.

The most significant and commonly cited caveats are restrictions that keep some troops currently in the north, west, and in Kabul from moving to RC South without prior approval from their respective nations' capitals (*Global Security* 2008). ISAF Deputy Chief of Staff Operations, Major General Michael S. Tucker says 60 per cent of kinetic events in Afghanistan occur in RC South area of operations where the Taliban resistance is strongest, and because of the lack of ISAF troops, he characterizes the situation in that region as a stalemate (Tucker 2009). It is important to underline that in RC South, the major troop contributors; the UK, Canada and the Netherlands, are relatively unconstrained by caveats. Their OMLTs are principally operating according to the OMLT program, except for the fact that the Dutch Kandak OMLT only deploy for four months. Senior United States military officials point with concern to constraints on German forces in Afghanistan, which are imposed by Germany's parliament. These include restrictions on German OMLTs that do not allow them to conduct combined offensive operations with their Afghan counterparts from 209th Corps, and on capable German SOF that are "FOB-locked," that is, effectively restricted to their Forward Operating Base (Department of Defense 2009, 13). The United States takes advantage of every opportunity to urge Allies to lift these restrictions, and between April and September of 2008, several nations removed caveats on their forces. Hence, progress is being made.

As elaborated on previously, an OMLT will not be validated if it is unable to conduct cross boundary movements. More seriously and more damaging for non-U.S. advisory teams is the impact caveats can have on ISAF's relationship with ANA. ISAF officials note that OMLTs that are unable to accompany ANSF counterparts on offensive

operations quickly lose both the Afghans' respect, and their own ability to shape and mentor the ANA. Most alarmingly, Afghan Minister of Defense Abdul Rahim Wardak said in November 2008 that ISAF training teams "don't have the same quality" as the ETTs because some OMLTs do not "drink from the same canteen" (CRS 2009, 14).

Different Rules of Engagement (ROE)

The second most important caveat within NATO is various ROE. Complete consensus or standardization of ROE should be sought, but may not be achievable. In any event, the CSTC-A and COM ISAF should reconcile differences as much as possible to develop and implement ROE that can be tailored by ISAF forces to their national policies. It is essential that OMLTs and partnering units understand each others' ROE, as it cannot be assumed that each will react in an identical fashion to a given situation. "Without this understanding events could result in misperceptions, confusion, and even fratricide" (JP 3-16 2007, III-11).

Balance Training and Operations

In terms of the effect the training delivers, it's arguably far more enduring than an offensive operation – the fact that you are building for the future.

Major Clark (UK), Commander ANA Training Team

Operations and training must better be balanced and NATO ISAF should focus more on the military desired end-state, and listen more to Afghan authorities than what currently is, and has been for years, the situation. NATO ISAF is a security assistance force, whose mission is to assist and support the Afghans, and not the other way around. In stability operations, the external assistance force cannot impose success on the host nation. The Afghan system of governance should emerge from tribal culture as the only

legitimate authority. Within the ANSF reform, the Afghan security forces are developed to enhance the legitimacy of GIROA, and not the “the occupying forces.”

In late 2008, senior Afghan and CSTC-A officials evinced an antipathy toward the concept of unit partnering. Minister of Defense Wardak argued forcefully: “There is some talk that we should do partnering, but I am against it – our units are standing on their own feet. I will try very hard to push against this partnering. If they have partner units, they would lose their ability to learn and operate independently” (CRS 2009, 45). Similarly, CSTC-A officials argue that ANSF units tend to perform less well when partnering with Coalition units, and that OMLTs and ETTs are more effective than “partners” in encouraging the ANSF to take initiative.

On the other hand, ANA privates and generals alike complain that they are sent into battle in ordinary Ford Rangers pickups with no body armor or helmets, while U.S soldiers wear flak vests and travel in armored Humvees. “We fight on the same ground and under the same threat as the Americans and the Coalition, but we don’t have what we need to operate independently. This has a poor effect on our soldiers’ morale,” said General Zahir Azmeni, the Army Chief spokesman (*LA Times* 2006). Moreover, U.S Officers said they plan operations jointly with Afghan Commanders, but some Afghan officers said in January 2009 that the Americans dictate the scope of the operations by controlling supplies, vehicles and air support.

On February 17, 2009, President Barack Obama ordered a Marine expeditionary brigade and an Army Stryker brigade combat team, totaling 12,000 soldiers and Marines, to Afghanistan. U.S. DoD officials said they will be based in RC South. General McKiernan has requested additional forces to bring more “boots on the ground” for the

expected fighting season 2009, which according to previous years should start in April, and second; to enhance the national security for the Presidential and Provincial elections taking place at 7000 different voting stations on August 20. Moreover, General Tucker said on February 19 that “the BCTs will operate within designated areas of operations and partner with ANSF” (Tucker 2009).

Apparently, there are conflicting views amongst senior ISAF commanders, CTST-A officials and Afghan DoD and ANA on how to operate jointly in Afghanistan. In a short term perspective, NATO ISAF prefers to partner with ANA and primarily fight the Taliban and other adversaries. Moreover, as stated by General Tucker, “even if we [NATO] killed 10,000 Taliban fighters in 2008, violence increased with 33 per cent” (Tucker 2009). The mantra of COIN is “shape, clear, hold and build.” Clear the area of insurgents, and then hold it so the insurgents cannot return. Finally, build the civic works and government structures. Therefore, it seems more appropriate to focus more on training the ANSF, because of two reasons. First, ANSF can build capability and capacity to HOLD (reference the Shape-Clear-Hold-Build concept) areas after they have been cleared for insurgency. Hence, ANSF can provide and sustain security for the population. Second, the sooner ANSF can reach the capability to provide security, the sooner NATO ISAF forces can start withdrawing forces from Afghanistan.

Fielding the OMLTs

In the beginning of 2009, there are a total of 32 validated OMLTs out of 42. This number is insufficient to meet both current need of 103 advisory teams in total, and the future needs in a 3-5 year perspective. The shortage of OMLTs delays ANA development and has a further adverse effect on police mentoring. At present, the police mentor

mission is significantly under-resourced; less than 200 police mentors from EUPOL are deployed to Afghanistan. There is an urgent requirement to fill the gap of more than 2000 police mentors. UN SRSG Kai Eide has noted that EUPOL staffing should increase significantly and has urged the EU to provide more and more appropriate personnel. NATO ISAF does not directly support ANP development with resources. However, “the more NATO OMLTs in the field, the more U.S. military assets can be applied to the police mentor mission” (CSIS 2008, 21).

While the United States is actively encouraging the Allies to provide more OMLTs and ANSF mentoring and training personnel, the United States is also examining the possibility of transitioning international training teams from Iraq to Afghanistan. Furthermore, U.S. National Army Guard personnel are supplementing OMLTs. For example, Illinois Army National Guardsmen support a Polish battle group, a Latvian OMLT will deploy with 11 members from the Michigan Army National Guard, and Ohio Army National Guardsmen are deploying with a Hungarian OMLT. Hungary, due to its poor performance within NATO (budget, armament and structural reform), is obliged to expand the sphere of the expedition mission as a kind of reparation, albeit it is arguable whether this role should involve combat operations within the ISAF (*Budapest Analyses* 2009). The ISAF welcomed the Hungarian deployment of a 40-member OMLT in the end of 2008, operating in the northern, less dangerous Baghlan province of Afghanistan. Furthermore, Hungary will probably send another OMLT to Kandahar as of July 2009, which is more dangerous from the point of view of Taliban activities. The Hungarian OMLT II will operate jointly with U.S. soldiers arriving from Ohio, under Hungarian command (*Budapest Analyses* 2009). It is doubtful that the OMLT composition as

described will be an effective means to develop ANA, because the Hungarian OMLTs lack the core competencies as required of OMLT members, as discussed previously, as well as being short of understanding NATO ISAF and U.S Forces command and control arrangements. The overemphasis on a quantitative approach in terms of the numbers of advisory teams, instead of focus on the quality and effect the OMLTs deliver, is a less than desirable course of action from the author's understanding of the OMLT program.

OMLT Selection Criteria

How long before we can withdraw our armed forces from Afghanistan is directly linked to the ANA capability to provide security themselves. The OMLT is the key to further develop the ANA. Consequently, we must continuously make sure that this mission is performed by the most competent officers the Norwegian Army possesses (Norwegian Senior National Representative. (SNR) in Afghanistan 2009)

An effective mentor is not, as the term might suggest, merely a giver of advice; he is a leader. Anyone who argues otherwise has never tried to calm down a panicky commanding officer into leaving his office to visit a combat outpost or had to persuade and cajole a reluctant company into crossing the line of departure. (Milburn & Lombard 2006, 112)

Due to the fact that the OMLT program is crucial to COM ISAF's exist strategy in Afghanistan, the quality of each mentor should reflect this priority. It is not a secondary mission to be fielded by personnel who barely meet rank and branch qualification requirements. Qualifications that enhance situational understanding are considered more critical than those dealing with military skills. The OMLTs serving on corps, brigade and Kandak level should therefore be able to overcome language difficulties, cultural differences and ANA institutional barriers. Advisory duty is a hard job, even more so in a COIN environment. Working effectively with the ANA in a country very different from where the OMLTs come from; strange ways,

incomprehensible actions, different concepts of right and wrong, good and bad, is probably the hardest military task. In a long term perspective, NATO countries should consider to seriously address the need for a proponent responsible for advisory issues, tailored for the future needs. In a short term perspective, every OMLT providing country should make sure they select, train and equip the OMLTs according to the minimum military requirements developed for this program.

Dr. Gerald Hickey is a U.S. anthropology scholar who spent ten months in the fields of Vietnam in 1964 as a researcher, interviewing several hundred American advisors of all categories. Most of his conclusions related to recommended selection criteria for American advisors 45 years ago are from the author`s point of view still valid for the OMLT program today. Mentors should be selected based on strong motivation for the task and on voluntary basis if possible. Furthermore, a careful screening process should be devised to test a candidate`s suitability from the point of view of: “Professional equipment, adaptability to foreign cultures, temperamental disposition, existing language skills or the ability to acquire languages quickly, the possibility to “culture fatigue” in a man who, though otherwise qualified, has had too many overseas assignments and is not keen on another” (CSI 2006, 124). The screening process quoted is still relevant for OMLT providing countries to adapt. However, the majority of the “experienced NATO” countries deploy their SOF, Commandos, Marines and equivalents. Those countries that do not have valid selection criteria, should revise their policy to send only the best.

ANA Endstate

The counterinsurgent's armed forces have to fulfill two different missions: to break the military power of the insurgent and to ensure the safety of the territory in each area. The insurgent's forces should be organized into two types of units, the mobile ones fighting in the rather conventional fashion, and the static ones staying with the population in order to protect it and to supplement with the political efforts.

David Galula

The quote from David Galula is still valid 45 years after he wrote *Counterinsurgency Warfare. Theory and Practice*. In a COIN environment, Galula argued that the counterinsurgent has little use for heavy and sophisticated forces designed for conventional warfare. On the contrary, for his ground forces, "the counterinsurgent needs infantry and more infantry, highly mobile and lightly armed" (Galula 1964, 93). Moreover, Galula articulated that the soldier's job is to win the support of the population, and in doing so, he has to engage in practical politics. Consequently, in counterinsurgency warfare, the rule is to apply the minimum of fire. Hence, the GIRoA clearly needs leaders who understand the nature of counterinsurgency warfare, as well as the Coalition forces assisting in the nation building process. Applying Galula's train of thought; the ongoing war in Afghanistan should be only 20 per cent military action, and 80 per cent political.

The final secondary research question in this thesis: What is the end state for an effective ANA when focus is on COIN operations on company levels or lower? To analyze that question, a retrospective glance is appropriate. Thirty years ago was the last time the Afghan National Army was organized to "modern" standards. The 100,000 - men strong conscription army in 1979 was well equipped and led by a professional officer corps mainly trained by the Soviet Union. Since the outbreak of the war with the

Soviet Union, the Afghan Army gradually disintegrated (Hyman 1992, 155). The reason for giving this description of the last time Afghanistan actually had a strong army, at least on paper, is to set the stage for understanding which tremendous challenge it has been and is for Afghanistan to build a new army after thirty years of war.

Military forces are developed primarily to counter external threats. The design of these forces develops from the analysis of those threats and the specific capabilities required countering them. Other key military missions include providing humanitarian assistance, and in special cases, countering certain types of internal military threats (FM 3-07 2008, 6-13). In stability operations, the external assistance force cannot impose success on the host nation. The host-nation government should emerge as the only legitimate authority. Within security sector reform, security forces are developed to enhance the legitimacy of the host-nation government. FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, describes the end state of host nation security forces to be the four C's: (1) *Competent* from the ministerial level to the individual soldier and police officer, across all related fields of interest and functional specialties, (2) *Capable* in size and effective enough to accomplish missions, remain sustainable over time, and maintain resources within state capabilities, (3) *Committed* to the security and survival of the state, the preservation of the liberties and human rights of the citizens, and the peaceful transition of authority, and (4) *Confident* in the ability to secure the country; earning the confidence of the citizenry, the government, and the international community (FM 3-07 2008, 6-9).

President Karzai articulates the end state to be a “nationally respected, professional, ethnically balanced ANA that is democratically accountable, organized, trained, and equipped to meet the security needs of the country” (Karzai 2003). The roles

of the ANA are (1) to secure the borders and deter external threats (2) to defeat terrorist forces (3) to disband, reintegrate, or imprison Illegal Armed Groups, and (4) to manage internal security threats and emergencies in cooperation with the ANP (Karzai 2003). Recognizing GIRoA's statement, CSTC-A defined the end state of ANA as "a respected, multi-ethnic, affordable, sustainable, loyal, and competent ministry of defense, general staff, and sustaining institutions capable of directing, commanding, controlling, training and supporting operational forces that have the capability to conduct internal counterinsurgency operations with limited international assistance" (Chan 2009).

All of the roughly 150,000 total assigned to ANSF are still developing, but the ANA under the Ministry of Defense, is currently, by a wide margin, the most capable force (Asia Foundation 2008). The ANA continues to demonstrate increasing competence, effectiveness, and professionalism. The five ANA Commando Kandaks, (there is one Commando Kandak in each Corps) mentored and trained by U.S. Army Special Forces deployed in Afghanistan, are feared by the insurgents and respected by the Afghan people (Department of Defense 2009, 8). In August 2008, the ANSF took over responsibility for security in the capital city of Kabul. As of December 2008, the ANA stood at approximately 68,000 soldiers, 52,000 of which were leading or engaged in operations side-by-side with ISAF forces. "That marks an increase from 29,366 in July 2006, 39,081 in July 2007, and 65,547 in July 2008" (CRS 2009, 39). Hence, the ANA has more than doubled its size since NATO in October 2006 extended its geographic area of responsibility to include the entire country, and implemented the OMLT program. However, this seems to be a biased account of the matter. Focus should be on *the quality of the ANA*, not one-sided focus on the numbers of troops assigned or present for duty.

Known to most people, statistics can be twisted to make the numbers support a message channeled through media in order to influence the population in the West.

ANA Progress Assessment

In January 2008, CSTC-A completed a field-level plan for ANSF development, and an operations order with further detail on the development and execution of the fiscal year 2008 ANA force generation program. The NATO ISAF Campaign Plan for the development of ANA provides field-level goals and objectives for the development of the Ministry of Defense and the ANA. The U.S. Ministry of Defense developed criteria, called capability milestones (CM), to assess ANA progress in manning, training, and equipping the force. ANA units are assessed against four capability milestones that range from CM1 to CM4. “A unit, agency, staff function, or installation rated at CM1 is fully capable of conducting its primary operational mission but may require assistance from the international community in certain situations” (GAO 2008, 16). For instance, a combat unit capable of operating at CM1 is fully capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations at the battalion level. However, coalition support may be required for certain capabilities, such as close air support, medical evacuation, or indirect fire support.

The ANA’s reliance of foreign military support for the foreseeable future is apparent on the ground. The commander of the 205th ANA Corps said that: “I confess we can’t do it ourselves, we are a poor country” (Baldauf 2006). By contrast, a unit, agency, or staff function rated at CM4 has been established, but is not yet capable of conducting its primary operational mission and can only undertake portions of its mission with significant assistance, and reliance on, international support (GAO 2008, 16). The

Campaign Plan identifies three key phases in the development of the ANA: Fielding, developing, and transitioning to strategic partnership which extends beyond 2019 (GAO 2008, 17). However, the Campaign Plan needs to be revisited because of the significant planned increase of the ANA. This process is ongoing and President Obama and his new administration are expected to take a new and comprehensive approach.

Three decades of war have made Afghanistan into what it is today. It may take an equal number of years of peace to turn it around. “No superficial milestone or achievement of capability in the near future will be able to hide operational deficiencies should the coalition forces expedite the size of the ANA and leave the Afghans to go it alone” (Chan 2007, 23). Few Afghan ANA units are capable of leading operations and efforts to develop their capability face several challenges. “As of April 2008, only two ANA units, out of 105 rated, were assessed CM1- fully capable,” by the U.S. Ministry of Defense (GAO 2008, 20). Only eight months later, as of January 2009, according to ISAF officials, the ANA had 46 Kandaks capable of battalion level operations (ISAF 2009). From a qualitative perspective, ISAF officials also note that ANA operational capabilities grew markedly during 2008. As an example, the ANA took over security of Kabul regional command from Italy in August 2008. Furthermore, the ANA had according to a U.S. DoD report of June 2008, taken responsibility of 30 significant combat and clearing operations to that date, and has demonstrated “increasing competence, effectiveness, and professionalism. The ANA is now leading in 75 per cent of the combat operations in the eastern sector” (CRS 2008, 35). The U.S. DoD report to Congress of January 2009 claims there were 16 units rated at CM1 in November 2008 (Department of Defense 2009, 8).

It is a concern that the quantitative assessments of ANA units are not very reliable. It is particularly worrying because all reports are American official reports to Congress. Therefore, confusion occurs, and the citizens of the United States should question the “winning in Afghanistan strategy.” For the record, the United States is the lead nation in the eastern sector. The rapid improvement in quality of the Kandaks is unexplainable and the reliability of the assessment is questionable. The three most important reasons for being in doubt are: the majority of COIN operations in Afghanistan are planned and conducted by and large by company sized units; second, a typical combat Kandak is only at about 50 per cent of its authorized strength at any given time (CRS 2008, 35); consequently and third, ANA battalion commanders and their staffs lack capable professional competence and experience how to conduct battalion level operations. Hence, it seems likely from a qualitative standpoint that both the CRS Report of November 2008 and the U.S. DoD Report of January 2009 paint a too optimistic and inaccurate picture of the ANA. It is tempting to speculate the underlying motives for these figures presented. Political reasons are a part of the story. The United States as well as the Coalition are under strong pressure to document progress in providing security in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, because Afghan soldiers, NCOs, and officers are trained separately and by different nations, there is a need to consolidate their training so that they can perform as a cohesive kandak. Thus, Afghan Army units undergo a validation process in the form of a two-week-long field exercise conducted by the Canadian Afghan National Training Center Detachment. This training exercise proves the tactical effectiveness of Afghan units as they conduct such scenarios as raids, ambushes, hasty attacks, hasty defenses, and even operations other than war (Chan 2007). Without the

ability to retain trained personnel, ANA units will continue to lack experience and thus be delayed in reaching their ability to lead security operations. For instance, in November 2007, the capability assessment of the ANA's 209th Corps lowered the rating of one of its battalions from CM2 to CM3 when the battalion failed to retain approximately half of its NCOs. Further, the assessment noted that progress developing the capability of this battalion could be delayed nearly a year (GAO 2008, 24).

An Affordable ANA

The size of the new ANA also depends on available resources. The cost of organizing, training, arming, and maintaining such a large force is phenomenal by Afghan standards. Insufficient funding will be devastating to the plan. The 134,000 ANA force structure calls for 20 brigades, a new division headquarters in Kabul, Corps-level artillery, engineer and Quick Reaction Force assets, as well as a commensurate increase in institutional support. Growing the ANA to 134,000, or more, raises the twin questions of funding and sustainability. The new total would include a base of 122,000, plus a personnel "float" of 12,000, on the model of the United States and other militaries, to support ongoing training and education (CRS 2009, 35). The "122 plus 12" target number for the ANA does not include additional Afghan trainers, and Afghan trainers are one of the few groups in the ANA that does not receive additional combat or incentive pay of some kind. Moreover, United States military officials training the ANA note that the target date for reaching the 134,000 total is the end of 2011, based on a growth rate, as of late 2008, of 28,800 per year, with an estimated attrition rate of eight to nine per cent. Thus, an important challenge is the constraints of the training process, including the capacity of the KMTC, and the numbers and capabilities of Afghan trainers.

It is expected that the currently planned ANA growth will be funded by the international community; the United States is currently the leading contributor. The United States will take the lead in supporting the expansion by providing funds for the initial training and equipping of new ANA units. The GIRoA and the United States Department of State (DoS) have begun to engage Allies and other key international partners to garner financial support for the sustainment of an expanded ANA (Department of Defense 2009, 34). Senior Afghan and international officials estimate that it will cost approximately \$3.5 billion per year to increase ANSF force structure, and then \$2.2 billion per year to sustain it. The international community must realize that further ANA development requires mentoring for many years to come. Second, the effort of mentoring, partnering an operationally ready ANA is not the sole responsibility of the United States. Every Coalition partner has the responsibility to play an active role from joint training with ANA operating in various provinces to the contribution of equipment and training courses (Chan 2007, 23). The bottom line is that, however, a nation chooses to fight a war, it has to pay enough to win it.

Building ANA Leadership and Culture from the Bottom

General David G. McKiernan, the NATO ISAF commander in Afghanistan, said in September 2008; “Building Afghan security and governance capability, from the bottom up at the local level and from the top down at the national level, will be one of the most important factors to winning in Afghanistan . . . Military capability by itself won't win this fight” (CSIS 2008, 14). Thus, he illustrates the two way approach. “The most important thing we need is officers who care about us, not better food, more money or improved weapons” (ANA Soldier 2007). The bottom-up issue raised in the statement

from General McKiernan is addressed by the ANA soldier of 209th Corps. In order to better understand the time perspective for the ANA development, keep in mind it takes about 15-20 years to educate a capable battalion commander in Western armies. How could it be possible to grow ANA faster? Afghanistan is still one of the poorest countries on Earth; it has a 20 percent literacy rate, limited infrastructure and no political structures or army in 2002.

Leadership is the core of the Afghan Army`s progress. If one does not have strong leaders and invest in equipment, it will not be maintained and it will not be used correctly. According to a former commander of Combined Forces Command Afghanistan: “if you accelerate the growth of the army, and the leadership is poor, the attrition problems cause it to be a poor investment” (U.S. Department of Defense 2007). “There is simply a lack of human capital,” according to General McKiernan (CSIS 2008, 13). “It will be at least 10 years before Afghan troops can handle national security without help from Canadians and other foreign soldiers,” says a top military trainer (Bailey 2006). British Col. Paul Farrar, with 32 years of service and no stranger to training foreign armies, after serving as the deputy commander of the international assistance wing of the KMTC, says “the Afghan National Army is making real but painfully slow progress.” U.S. Army Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry makes the point that “we can help train an army, we can help equip an army, we can help build facilities for the army, but only the Afghan people can breathe a soul into that army” (U.S. Department of Defense 2007). The fundamental challenge is building institutional capacity – including leadership ability, physical infrastructure, effective systems, and trained and competent human resources (CRS 2009, 44).

The Afghan Vote

You see those mountains . . . those mountains have been here for a long time. Sometimes, you have to listen to the mountains. We have been here a long time. We may be uneducated, but we're not stupid. Sometimes you need to listen to us (Mortenson 2006, 149).

The ANA must be built on Afghan values. Hence, various Afghan ideas and input should be heeded to develop the ANA. Unfortunately, that is often suppressed by the need of the West to provide progress according to Western standards. The current CSTC-A commander, Major General Richard P. Formica explains his command by drawing a parallel to the ANA development, which is a linkage to the first lesson of Mr. Mortenson, by saying that “we may need to let it be their solution, and their way, with our support . . . better way to execute it” (Formica 2009). Mr. Mortenson’s second lesson is that sometimes the supporting countries to the Afghanistan development have to listen to the mountains, and you’ve got to take time to build relationships, and have that “third cup of tea.” Where billions of dollars fail, it will not hurt to listen to local experts. Moreover, in the discussion of what should be the right number of the ANA, one should listen more to the Afghans. Many Afghan officials share the view that “134,000” will prove insufficient. Minister of Defense Wardak says Afghanistan has never yet had the proper proportion of troops to provide area security and to protect the population. Current force sizing, he notes, assumes the presence of a large international force – which will not always be there, and whose capabilities, he argues, are roughly double that of their Afghan counterparts. He concludes that “between 200,000 and 250,000 would be the proper size for the ANA” (CRS 2008, 35).

In February 2007, the 209th Corps implemented the Corps Planning Group for the first time ever. The corps OMLT explained the purpose and effect of teamwork and that it

is better with a good plan in time, than a perfect plan too late, or no plan at all. At that time, the author would characterize the ANA culture as extremely control oriented and distinguished by leadership micromanagement. The corps commander bypassed the chain of command and submitted tasks directly to company commanders. The command climate had a huge potential for improvement. For the OMLT, it was important to understand the underlying causes for this non-beneficial culture. The ANA counterparts to the brigade and corps OMLTs explained that initiative was historically rewarded by being put to prison, as a result of influence from the Soviet officer training system. Hence, even the G-heads and full colonels were afraid to act on behalf of the responsibility described in their job descriptions. The establishment of the Corps Planning Group was the turning point for changing the command climate in the 209th Corps. The corps commander assumed the role of a change agent, and based on information he and his G2 and G3 gained from weekly joint coordination meetings with the NATO ISAF RC, he proactively started planning which allowed the brigade and Kandaks sufficient time for planning and preparations, according to the 2/5 formula for army military planning. The corps commander thus challenged the ANA system by not waiting for orders from the Ministry of Defence in Kabul. However, much more time is required to change and sustain a positive command climate in a corps to develop an ethical and a strong ANA culture.

President Karzai has urged the international society to fight terror at its roots, and to stop fighting the symptoms of terrorism in Afghan villages. He claims that the problem is regional and that the approach must be concentrated on the sanctuaries that train, equip and motivate the extremist. Furthermore, he says the West has not properly understood

the regional problem and has failed to attack its underlying causes (Karzai 2008). The relevance to ANA is that the whole army is overstretched in fighting this “long war.” The rapid phase of ANA military operations, instead of more focus on training is slowing down the qualitative growth of the ANA. The symptoms are obvious: 50 per cent retention rate, 17 per cent absent without leave (AWOL) rates (AWOL) and, 20 percent of combat personnel assigned are not present for duty (GAO 2008, 21-23). A typical ANA contract lasts for 3 years. At the end of a contract, ANA personnel are given the opportunity to re-enlist with the Afghan Army. Between March 2006 and February 2008, just over half of those combat personnel eligible to re-enlist opted to do so (GAO 2008, 23). Without the ability to retain trained personnel, ANA units will continue to lack experience and thus may be delayed in reaching their ability to lead security operations. Therefore, more emphasis on *quality training of Kandak and brigade level units* during the ANA six- month long operational phase is utterly required. The short term risk of reducing ANA involvement in operations will have long term high pay off in terms of increased ability to sooner provide national security. Hence, NATO ISAF can reduce the military foot print and gradually withdraw forces from Afghanistan.

ANA Constraints

The three other factors that have the most serious impact on the development of ANA are personnel and resource constraints, and an inadequate ANP. First, ANA faces a significant demographic gap of personnel between the ages of 35 and 55, the legacy of Afghanistan’s recent history of warfare. While the ANA can draw on its “older” personnel now to serve in leadership capacities, it will effectively take a generation to fully train and prepare the next contingent of ANA senior leaders. Second, the

development of capable ANA forces may be delayed by shortages in equipment, as units cannot be certified as fully capable unless they have 85 percent or more of their critical equipment items (GAO 2008, 30). The reason for the delay is a matter of priority. There are competing global priorities and production delays. United States forces currently in combat have first priority to receive some of the equipment that is also requested for the ANA. Simultaneously, officials from Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) say security in other nations, such as Iraq, Georgia and Lebanon receive higher priority (GAO 2008, 29). NATO standard heavy machine guns and mortars would therefore not likely be delivered until 2010. Third, the ANSF is conceptually dependent on a strong and reliable ANP. ANP are being developed as a paramilitary force to contribute to the counterinsurgency effort by joining the ANA in COIN operations, and by protecting the population after the ANA “clears.” General David McKiernan says that there is a longer way to go with the ANP due to a large degree of corruption and a lack of basic policing values.

The Focus District Development program put emphasis on training, installing values and mentoring the police. There are 390-plus districts in Afghanistan and only 42 districts have conducted the program, where the newly trained police are re-inserted with police mentoring teams (Atlantic Council of the United States 2008). Despite that General McKiernan claims NATO ISAF has found the program largely successful so far, there is no doubt it will take a long time before the population, the center of gravity in COIN, will trust the ANP. After an investment of nearly \$6 billion, no police unit is assessed as capable of performing its mission (GAO 2008). Curiously, a major survey of

Afghan popular opinion indicates that the ANP is the second most highly regarded public institution, after the ANA (Asia Foundation 2008, 25).

Practitioners underscore that ANSF development is highly dynamic. As ANP capabilities grow, the ANP may increasingly assume responsibility for domestic missions now performed by the ANA. As total ANSF numbers and capabilities grow, Afghan forces may increasingly assume responsibility from international security forces. And when – as expected – the security challenges from the insurgency diminish, the ANSF may shift from COIN to more traditional peacetime foci, including external defense for the ANA, and civilian law enforcement for the ANP (CRS 2009, 66).

ANA Values

Each and every soldier who joins the ANA, regardless of ethnicity or tribal affiliation, must equally and publicly bear true allegiance to the Constitution of the Holy Koran. This constitution is described as their “moral highway in life.” Death in battle is still the ultimate honor and sacrifice for the Afghan soldier. The translated words by a Canadian OMLT interpreter of the Constitution of the Holy Koran represents hope for the future of ANA:

This is one truth and faithful for all the people of Afghanistan by participation in the Afghan National Army. By the name of ALLAH almighty, I swear that I will be an officer or a soldier with discipline for all rules and regulations for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

I accept and will follow all the orders and guidance of all officers and commanders in all situations, times and places in accordance to the defense of National Freedom.

I pledge and support the Islamic Government and will not benefit or profit from my position within the ranks and if not, I will lose my life in the Afghan National Army for this.

If I should do something against these mentioned things, I should be punished and sentenced according to the law of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

(The Canadian Army Lessons Learned Centre 2006)

The “Afghan Warrior Ethos” reflects traditional values of western armies; as loyalty, respect, duty, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. The ANA soldiers should live these values and assume lead of not only the ANA development by example, but provide moral and ethical qualities to Afghanistan in the nation building process. If the course is right, and required international support maintained, the ANA will become a competent, capable, committed, and confident instrument of Afghan power in the future. In January 2009, the first ANA officers graduated from the Afghan Army Academy since 2001, which indicates a prospering future for well educated officers who can build the ANA from the bottom.

ANA Post-Insurgency

Finally, when the war against the insurgents is over, what will be the appropriate strength and balance of the ANSF? Some civil-military experts caution correctly that civilian control of the military may erode when a state’s army is by far its most competent and effective organization. Furthermore, demobilizing some parts of the ANA is definitely an option to be analyzed. Even with substantial international support and funding, there are not many solid arguments for one of the poorest countries on Earth to uphold a 200, 000- soldier strong army, although Minister of Defense Wardak suggests Afghanistan in the future could become a net exporter of security, providing trained, interoperable ANSF to serve in UN peace operations or other multi-national coalition efforts around the world. Wardak continues, “one day we will pay our debt by fighting

shoulder to shoulder with you,” words that might apply on the international arena as well as in Afghanistan (CRS 2009, 67).

Evaluation Criteria

NATO ISAF has developed three lines of operations in order to assist GIROA to defeat the insurgency, establish a secure environment, extend viable governance, and promote development throughout Afghanistan. The three lines of operations are Security, Governance and Reconstruction and Development (*Small Wars Journal* 2008). A key task along the security line of operation is to build ANA capability, capacity and credibility. Hence, the OMLT program is a means to achieve both the ISAF and the ANA end state. Moreover, in order to assess the OMLT program and answer the primary research question, assessments of the OMLT performance and effectiveness are required.

The tools to be used are Measures of Performance (MOP) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOE). MOP is a question to challenge whether the OMLT program is the right thing to do to accomplish the training mission. The answer to this question, based on the analysis in this chapter, is yes because of the relatively rapid quantitative and qualitative growth of ANA since the OMLT program was implemented in 2006. Overall, pending on the source, it is assessed that the ANA now participates in 70 per cent of ISAF operations and leads 60 per cent of joint operations.

Nevertheless, the numbers of advisory teams are not yet matched by the size of the ANA organization. Therefore, as of 2009, the advisory performance is less than desirable, which unchanged, consequently will extend the ANSF training mission, with quite a few secondary effects related to governance and development and reconstruction.

MOE is by definition “a criterion used to assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment that is tied to measuring the attainment of an end state, achievement of an objective, or creation of an effect” (JP 5-0 2006, III-61). In other words, does the OMLT program have the desired effects on the ANA development according to the expectations? To give an exact and objective response to this question is difficult. Thus, to select the appropriate evaluation criteria are fundamental and has been challenging. As presented in chapter 3, the evaluation criteria chosen are Restraint, Perseverance and Legitimacy, which are three principles of joint operations.

Ladghar Brahimi, who was the SR to the UN SG in Afghanistan from October 2001 through December 2004, said December 2008 that “ISAF is perceived a dysfunctional” and “it runs the risk of being seen by most Afghans as a foreign occupying force” (Brahimi 2008). If the Afghan perception is correct, ISAF should shift the main effort from offensive operations in order to defeat the insurgency, to prioritize the ANSF training mission. Thus, the OMLT program should become the main effort in order to intensify the endeavor to assist rising and developing the ANA. From a security point of view, that should be the military solution for how to win in Afghanistan. ISAF and OEF soldiers trained to conduct combat operations may win tactical engagements, but lose the campaign because of second and third order effects of their actions. Therefore, there is not only a military solution to the development in Afghanistan. Those who still believe that can easily find unpleasant examples in the Afghan history. There are numerous examples proving that foreign occupying forces do not fare well in Afghanistan.

Restraint

JP 3-0 Joint Operations articulates that, “the purpose of restraint is to limit collateral damage and prevent the unnecessary use of force” (JP 3-0 2008, 199). During stability operations, military capability must be applied even more prudently since the support of the local population is essential for success. The OMLT program is essential to develop ANA to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan population. When political restraints are hampering the operation, the senior commanders from participating ISAF countries should maintain their integrity and inform their national authorities of the consequences of unclear ROE or other command and control issues. Thus, ROE should be consistently reviewed and revised as necessary. Through media, world citizens have seen that the use of excessive force could adversely affect efforts to gain or maintain legitimacy and impede the attainment of both short- and long-term goals. Public support in the West will be harder to maintain the next three-five years, unless security progress occurs.

Perseverance

We must focus more attention and resources on training the Afghan Security Forces

President Obama

“The purpose of perseverance is to ensure the commitment necessary to attain the national strategic end state” (JP 3-0 2008, 200). All international instruments of nation power are required to be applied synchronized and coordinated in Afghanistan. Acknowledging that security is a prerequisite for development and reconstruction, the new and comprehensive strategy in Afghanistan should concentrate more human and

other recourses to develop the ANSF. In this context, the OMLT program which currently plays a key role has the potential to provide excellence in security assistance.

Military termination criteria for ISAF should easily be developed and broadly and openly communicated. The military instrument of power in Afghanistan should only be supporting the diplomatic, economic, and informational measures. History proves that the time factor may be the critical factor and the tipping point for the West losing the war in Afghanistan. Therefore, every step that can shorten the military effort should be embraced by NATO as well as the Afghans. NATO has pledged loyalty to a comprehensive approach and guaranteed patience to pursuit the goals and objectives of NATO as required for success. NATO cannot afford to lose in Afghanistan. Neither can, especially, the smaller NATO countries. Their domestic security policies depend heavily on NATO strength. Without the NATO “security policy,” the world will become a more insecure place. Therefore, NATO countries should stand up and sign up for more OMLTs. A NATO country must “export security” in order to “import security” when and if needed. Moreover, political effect will only be realized if a country can provide a Kandak OMLT according to the requirements and which is able to operate without caveats. A handful of OMLT mentors on Corps and Brigade level only, do not impress anybody.

Legitimacy

“The purpose of legitimacy is to develop and maintain the will necessary to attain the national strategic end state” (JP 3-0 2008, 200). The NATO ISAF mandate is provided by the UN Security Council. Hence, the ISAF mission has broad political support in the Western world. The Afghan problem can only be solved by comprehensive

international support. Both President Obama and General McKiernan have stated that the United States cannot do this alone. The OMLT program aims to develop ANA that contribute to the legitimate governance of the local populace. Thus, the OMLT program is an excellent tool not only to militarily train the ANA, but also to impose democratic values crucial for building a sound military ANA culture as well as a vital contribution to improve GIRoA's ability to provide good governance. In this context, the ANA has the potential to support Afghanistan on its rise towards a true nation state. Finally, the OMLT program is truly an excellent example of burden sharing within NATO in addition to set an example for the practical unity of effort.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide qualitative answers as to what extent the program designed by the NATO to assist the development of the ANA is effective and successful. Chapter 4 has offered a methodical and detailed analysis to present qualitative answers to the primary and secondary questions of this thesis. Consequently, the answer to the primary research questions is yes: The OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective ANA. Chapter 5, which is the final and next chapter of this thesis, discusses the conclusion and the recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Rebuilding Afghanistan's National Army is not only an essential element in stabilizing the war-torn country but also a contribution to the effectiveness of the US-led international war on terrorism in South and Central Asia. It is a highly cost-effective project, but also an expensive and lengthy endeavor. Its success is linked to three major variables: the emergence of a legitimate broad-based government, the availability of resources, and time.

Ali Ahmad Jalali, Former Afghan Minister of Interior

The OMLTs are connecting people in Afghanistan. NATO, through its security assistance mission in Afghanistan, is reinforcing member countries' collective security at home and providing Afghanistan the chance to build a secure and hopeful future for its people. The international approach must be comprehensive and every instrument of international power must be applied. The military is only a part of the solution in Afghanistan. The ISAF campaign plan consists of three lines of operation: Security, Governance and Reconstruction and Development. ANSF are the most legitimate forces to provide security for Afghans, hence they should hold and sustain security in the Afghan villages after the insurgency is cleared. The OMLT program is a NATO ISAF measure to assist building the ANA along the security line of operation, in order to allow the Afghans to win in Afghanistan. The OMLT program is connecting people in Afghanistan, making NATO more interoperable on the tactical level. The OMLT program also serves as a change agent for military development in each OMLT participating nation. The OMLTs are important to the ISAF Commander's exit strategy. NATO should rise to the occasion and provide the number of certified OMLTs required

in order to comprehensively assist the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to bring the ANA up to operating capability.

The OMLT program is the appropriate model for providing assistance in the development of an effective ANA. The findings in the analysis support that the OMLT program is an excellent approach to build the ANA capacity and capability to provide safety and security for the Afghan people. Adding more ANSF trainers now could enable NATO ISAF countries to reduce their forces later. The OMLT mission has a culture dimension which allows NATO ISAF to demonstrate the virtues and values of the West for the ANA to consider. Hence, the OMLT program also is values operations, which as a second order effect also could positively influence good governance in Afghanistan.

The OMLT training process, where three training courses are offered by NATO, is adequate, especially the Kandak OMLT training course in Germany. National OMLT training is organized differently amongst the various nations. No common curriculum based on the OMLT validation criteria exists. The OMLT training process is more thorough and extensive than the ETT training process.

The most important competencies for every mentor are to be able to communicate, cooperate and coordinate effectively in the operational environment. An effective and efficient OMLT depends on the OMLTs having the right knowledge for their role, having good knowledge of the environment in which they are working and having the ability to apply their knowledge. The character of the OMLT mentor and his cultural understanding are relatively more important than professional technical and tactical skills, as the mentor serves on higher ANA levels. Corps and brigade OMLTs must have situational understanding including language skills; possess personal

characteristics required as maturity to build rapport, to act with flexibility and to be respectful and patient. Furthermore, the senior mentors should be proficient in operational level planning and understand ANA doctrine.

The Kandak OMLT's most critical factors are personal and professional credibility. The second most important requirement is technical and tactical proficiency. An effective and efficient Kandak OMLT depends on its ability to find flexible ways within the command and control regulations, the ISAF and OEF mandates and various national ROE, to partner effectively with their ANA counterparts on the one hand, and with SOFs, QRFs and PRTs on the other hand. Moreover, an understanding of ANA *modus operandi* and how to balance the training requirement with the continuously demand for conducting operations.

The ETT and OMLT functions are similar. However, the OMLTs are more robust organized and better manned from a both quantitative and qualitative perspective. The OMLTs are also change agents for developing NATO as well as an improved national combined arms proficiency in a COIN environment. The ETTs are better suited to planning than execution.

The OMLT tour length (four-nine months) affects their effectiveness and efficiency compared with the ETTs tour length (generally 12-15 months) and the ANA training cycle (nine months). The OMLT lack of interoperable capabilities to plug and play with other partners are hampering their coaching, teaching and mentoring abilities.

Some OMLTs are suffering from written and unwritten political constraints. Due to national caveats, there are variations in the degree to which OMLTs can participate in

operations with their ANA counterparts. The lack of ability to conduct cross boundary movements is the most important caveat that must be lifted.

ANA operations and training must be better balanced. NATO ISAF should focus more on the military desired end-state, and listen more to Afghan authorities. Hence, the ANA training mission is more important than current operations from a long term security perspective.

The command and control structure for the OMLTs is dysfunctional and too complex. The C2 arrangements with the OMLTs reflect the lack of synchronization between ISAF and CSTC-A in providing guidance to the OMLTs. The foremost reason for this conflicting guidance is the desire for immediate operational results by ISAF, which in turn disrupts CSTC-A progress in their long-term ANA training mission.

Another important hindrance to OMLT-ANA credibility are the different approaches by the nations to the “OMLT embedded concept” on supporting the ANA and also the ANA expectation that the OMLTs will offer the same level of support as the ETTs.

Working effectively with the ANA in a country very different from where the OMLTs come from; strange ways, incomprehensible actions - different concepts of right and wrong, good and bad - is probably the hardest military task. Consequently, the OMLT mission should be performed by the most competent officers from each country. The OMLT selection criteria and the individual screening process should reflect the importance - as well as the nature of the mission. It is not coincidental that SOF traditionally has been earmarked to train indigenous security forces.

It takes a minimum of 15-20 years to educate a capable battalion commander in Western armies. How can it then be possible to grow ANA to the end state during the next three-five years?

The author

The ANA end state is not well communicated in exact terms neither by ISAF nor GIRoA. Changing the internal culture of an army is a difficult, time-consuming and problematic task. While a unique, well considered, carefully tailored, and long term approach might work; normal military training and normal military approaches do not. The advisory environment offers no easy, quick fixes. It demands hard focused work and an unusual situational understanding. To build “a respected, multi-ethnic, affordable, sustainable, loyal, and competent ministry of defense, general staff, and sustaining institutions capable of directing, commanding, controlling, training and supporting operational forces that have the capability to conduct internal counterinsurgency operations with limited international assistance,” requires patience and endurance from the international community and enhanced responsibility from GIRoA (Chan 2009).

The end state for an ANA Combat Kandak is more precisely articulated as “when it is fully capable of planning, executing and sustaining COIN operations at the battalion level,” in an environment shaped and synchronized at the Brigade and Corps level. Therefore, the OMLTs must focus primarily at the Kandak level. However, the bottom line for the end state is as for any professional Army; capable of securing its citizens from external threats as well as affordable to GIRoA.

Growing the ANA to 134,000, or more, no later than 2013, assumes a constant yearly increase of 11 OMLTs, based on the out-year prediction of ISAF OMLT numbers.

Recommendations

Success in Afghanistan is achievable but is entirely dependent upon Afghanistan's ability to take responsibility for their security. (CGSC Class 2009-01, Staff Groups 16A and 16B 2009, 53)

Having addressed the conclusions to the research questions in the previous paragraph, the following section presents the five major and logical recommendations. The recommendations are listed in order of importance to improve the OMLT program: First, the command and control for the OMLTs should be simplified in order to improve their effectiveness and reduce the risk for losing soldiers lives. Second, the ability for OMLTs to conduct cross boundary movements is crucial to support the ANA rotation of Kandaks Afghan wide as a part of the ANA mobile concept. Political caveats limiting the OMLTs ability to conduct operations according to the minimum military requirements detailed for the OMLT program should be lifted. Third, the OMLT deployment duration should be increased to at least nine months to match the ANA training cycle. The Kandak OMLT should be introduced to the ANA counterpart in the beginning of the ANA Red training phase. Fourth, ISAF and CSTC-A should in cooperation with the Afghan Ministry of Defense, minimize the impact of operations on ANA training. A clear delineation is urgently required. Fifth, NATO should provide a standardized training package based on "best practice" for the national OMLT training. The training program should be based on the OMLT validation criteria. The Kandak OMLT training courses in Germany and the NATO OMLT above Kandak Level Training in Poland should be mandatory.

Additional Recommendations

The study also discovered several additional insights that might prove valuable for additional research. The following recommendations come from themes related to the research questions. Foremost, this thesis did not discuss the way ahead for NATO in regard to organizing an advisory corps within the Alliance, nor the need to establish a NATO Center of Excellence for COIN operations. However, the first step is to make sure the advisory competence built amongst the OMLT providing nations in Afghanistan is maintained and institutionalized nationally, and that lessons learned are continuously shared within the Coalition and the Alliance. Second, the ISAF OMLT “train the trainer” concept is most likely applicable to several other functional areas within the Afghan society. Future research should exploit the possibilities of this comprehensive approach utilizing all the instruments of national power. Additionally, international support for reestablishing an Afghan nation founded on an Afghan way of merging the democratic system with the tribal system of governance requires an analysis of values, supported by the military instrument of international power, to be incorporated in Afghan culture, could be an interesting topic to track. Finally, this thesis clearly avoided recommending specific changes as to what the end state for the ANA should be when the regional insurgency is defeated. How to utilize the competence of the ANA in such a situation would also be an interesting topic to pursue.

Closing

Building the Afghan National Security Forces is the fastest possible way of solving the security problem in Afghanistan. This thesis illustrates that the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team program is the appropriate model for providing assistance

in the development of an effective Afghan National Army. However, NATO's security assistance mission requires more and continued emphasis on enabling the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to provide national and regional stability within its own means and capabilities. Therefore, NATO should send their best qualified soldiers to coach, teach and mentor the Afghan National Security Forces. NATO's mission success related to the ANA training endeavor depends on the OMLTs possessing the right personal and professional skill-sets and having the political support and freedom of action to operate according to the tenets. Building the ANA will require patience and resources for years to come, but the OMLT program is the most cost effective NATO solution to the security issue which finally can facilitate the exit of Coalition forces from Afghanistan.

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